WORLD / A22

Prince William turns 25, now entitled to part of Diana's $12.94-M estate

NEWS / A2

GMA orders probe of allegedly smuggled 51 M liters of fuel in Subic

SAT. SPECIAL / F1

Intrepid filmmakers go the extra mile to shoot 'Kadin'

NEWS / A2

Opposition bloc in tatters as only 5 senators attend secret balloting to decide presidency

Imelda extols beauty, love at business forum

AY, SUS! NAGSALITA NA NAMAN!

By Michelle V. Remo

OBVIOUSLY EUPHORIC over her latest court victory, Imelda Marcos held forth before a group of business leaders late

IMELDA/ A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
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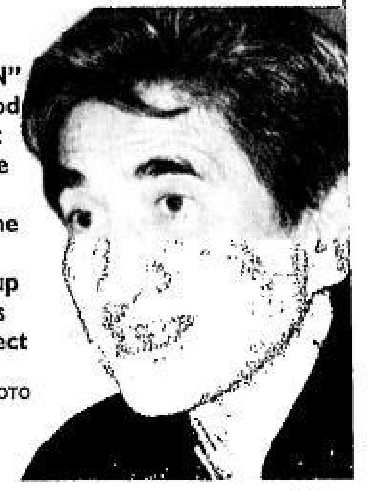
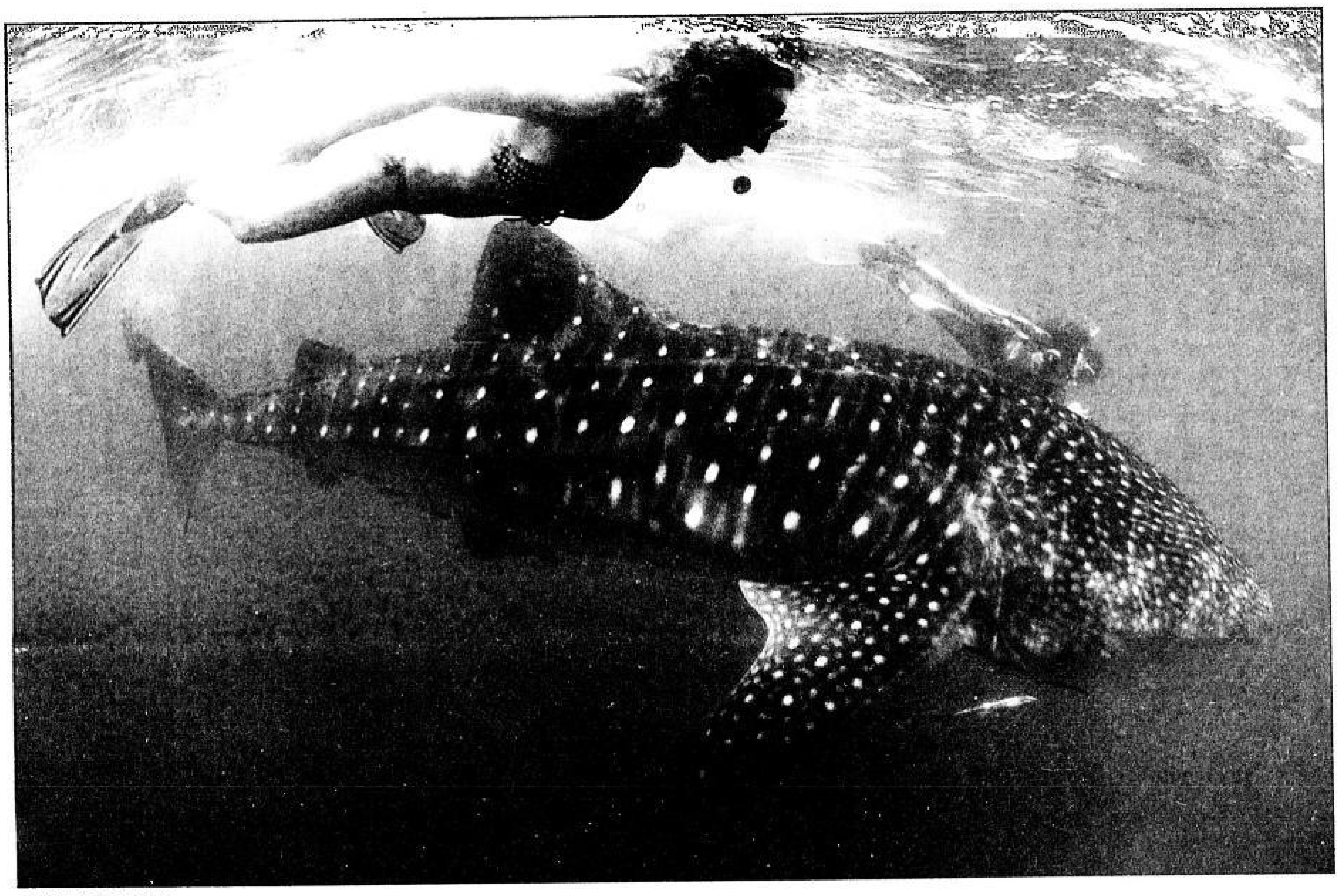


"THE INSPIRATION" of the Oakwood mutineers but no evidence he was a participant, the DOJ says in dismissing coup d'etat charges vs Senator-elect Honasan. PDI PHOTO

Raps vs Gringo dropped

Palace: No deal with GMA; DOJ action based on weak evidence



GENTLE GIANT
Thanks to the whale sharks and environmentalists, a backward fishing town like Donsol, Sorsogon is now a prime tourist spot transforming local fishermen into whale spotters, dive guides and whale protectors (and earning extra). Tourists swim with a nearly 20 feet long but gentle butanding, which is what the locals call the endangered, giant fish. AFP

By Leila B. Salaverria

SENATOR-ELECT GREGORIO "Gringo" Honasan might have served as the inspiration for the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny, but he cannot be charged with coup d'etat for lack of evidence to prove his direct participation in it, according to Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

In Malacañang, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye denied that the dismissal of the coup d'etat charge against Honasan was part of a deal he cut with President Macapagal-Arroyo when they secretly met at the Palace last month.

In a resolution issued yesterday, Gonzalez ordered the Makati prosecutor to withdraw the criminal case against Honasan and reversed the findings of a Department of Justice panel released only in April that sought to indict the latter as a leader of the mutiny.

But Gonzalez stressed that the clearing of Honasan should not lead to the dismissal of the coup d'etat charges against detained Senator-elect Antonio Trillanes IV and other military officers because, he said, they were shown to have directly taken part in the mutiny.

Bunye justified Gonzalez's action, saying it could only mean that the evidence against Honasan was weak.

"Well, I believe the action was taken based on the evidence. Apparently the DOJ, which has jurisdiction over this investigation, believes that the evidence against Sen-

RAPS VS GRINGO/ A6

GMA leaves today for Singapore, E. Guinea

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO leaves today for Singapore to address a regional gathering of political and economic heavyweights that will examine East Asia's growing clout and the financial crisis that brought it to its knees a decade ago. *(See special report on this page.)*

The President's three-day visit to the city-state is just the first leg of a trip that will take her on a historic state visit to the west-central African state of Equatorial Guinea.

Ms Arroyo will be the first Philippine President to visit the tiny nation, a former Spanish colony that is now the third-largest oil producer in sub-Saharan Africa. Some 2,500 overseas Filipino workers have found jobs in its petrochemical industry.

Equatorial Guinea President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo made a state visit to the Philippines in May 2006, during which he invited Ms Arroyo to visit his nation.

"This is very significant because Equatorial Guinea is a major producer of oil, even bigger than Brunei as far as oil production is concerned. It's also an important visit because we have quite a number of expatriates, about 2,500," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Bunye said a major joint venture agreement will be finalized during the visit between the Philippine National Oil Co. and its

GMA LEAVES/ A8

Bedol missing again as day of reckoning nears

By Nikko Dizon
and Leila B. Salaverria

AFTER MORE THAN A MONTH of delay, the Commission on Elections (Comelec) yesterday ordered the tabulation of the disputed Maguindanao votes but, in a move that flustered the opposition, ruled it should be held in the stronghold of a political dynasty backing the Arroyo administration.

The Comelec order came as Maguindanao's controversial provincial election supervisor, Lintang Bedol, again went missing—the second time since the May 14 midterm polls that Bedol could not be located by Comelec officials.

A Comelec commissioner said that Bedol—a key figure in the poll controversy centered on allegations that tallies were manufactured to produce a 12-0 vote for the administration's Team Unity senatorial candidates in the province—again "cannot be found."

In a resolution, the Comelec directed the special provincial board of canvassers to reconvene and tabulate the vote tallies—called the municipal certificates of canvass (CoCs)—not in Manila, as opposition lawyers wanted, but in Shariff Aguak, the provincial capital of Maguindanao.

Opposition lawyer Leila de Li-

BEDOL/ A8

CA's 'Big 5's' extortion open secret, says Lacson

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.
and Christian V. Esguerra

SENATOR-MEMBERS OF THE Commission on Appointments (CA) are pushing for a broad inquiry into the supposed extortion racket victimizing Cabinet appointees awaiting confirmation.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the racket exposed on Thursday by outgoing Negros Oriental Rep. Herminio Teves was "an open secret" in the confirmation process that supposedly involved "haggling and wheeling and dealing."

Lacson said he himself had been approached by a Cabinet appointee who offered him a project complete with a pro forma letter for a project where he would get P3.5 million and the requesting department, the remaining P1.5 million.

"I exposed this on the floor during the budget deliberations. I don't know about the others, but

CA'S 'BIG 5'/ A8

How to create a 'green house' even in city

By TJ Burgonio

EVEN IN CROWDED METRO Manila, you can build and live in comfort in an energy-efficient "green house"—and, in the process, do your bit in curbing global warming and protecting the environment.

"One of the things we can do in response to the changing temperatures and the warming of the planet is to make positive and eco-friendly changes in the spaces that we inhabit," says architect-turned-environmentalist Gigie Cruz.

"If you love the environment, start with yourself. As they say, everything begins at home," she says.

Cruz, 32, is the assistant coordinator of the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), a member of the EcoWaste Coalition, and an architecture graduate of the University of Santo Tomas.

With the idea of "green buildings" starting to gain ground in other countries, Cruz is offering simple tips on how Filipinos can build a green, and therefore eco-friendly, house.

HOW TO CREATE/ A8

10 YEARS AFTER CRISIS

When will China bubble burst?

(Last of three parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

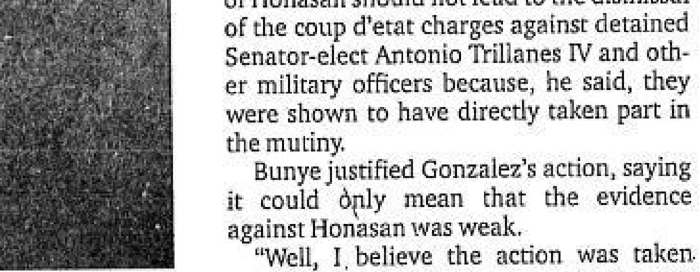
SHANGHAI—WHEN FINANCIAL crisis devastated its Asian neighbors a decade ago, China sat safely on the sidelines, its own markets and banks largely closed off from the world and insulated from the upheavals wracking more open economies.

But today, China could be ripe for a crisis of its own that might resemble the collapse of Japan's "Bubble Economy" in the early 1990s—and have enormous global impact, analysts warn.

Just as in Japan at that time, stock and property prices here are soaring. Banks have lent billions to build malls, office towers and apartment buildings—although many remain unfilled.

Authorities warn the economy

WHEN/ A10



SKY-ROCKETING: Real estate prices are up and away in China. Banks have lent billions to build malls and office towers. AP

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Western and Central Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly coudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thundertorms.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Mostly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Mostly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Mostly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Mostly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Mostly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Mostly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Mostly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, INQUIRER RESEARCH/06/22/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

No 'secret vote' in Senate caucus

ONLY FIVE members of the incoming Senate—Noynoy Aquino, Jamby Madrigal, Loren Legarda, Mar Roxas and Rodolfo Biazon—showed up at the caucus where they were supposed to pick a candidate for Senate president in a secret ballot. ROGER MARGALLO

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PLANS OF THE OPPOSITION TO FORGE A UNITed front in the Senate crashed to the ground yesterday after a secret balloting aimed at extracting a common candidate for Senate president failed to proceed due to poor attendance.

The abandonment of the caucus has firmed up speculation that some senators who ran under the Genuine Opposition intend to form an alliance with administration senators, thereby nullifying the landslide victory of GO in the recent elections.

Only six opposition senators—Mar Roxas, Panfilo Lacson, Jamby Madrigal, Loren Legarda, Rodolfo Biazon, and Noynoy Aquino—attended the caucus held at the Manila Golf Club in Makati City.

Absent were Francis Escudero, Alan Peter Cayetano, Francis Pangilinan, Jinggoy Estrada and Antonio Trillanes, who, in any case, was not allowed to go out of his cell.

The main rivals for the post, incumbent Senate President Manuel Villar and Aquilino Pimentel Jr., purposely kept away from the event.

A few hours after the start of the meeting at around noon, the six senators present, and, through the phone, Pimentel, Trillanes and Estrada—endorsed a joint statement calling for the formation of a united opposition in the Senate and committing the group to choose a leader among themselves and abide by the majority's decision.

Invoking Quezon

"The opposition bloc must remain united. We call upon all opposition senators to value the country's good over and above previous party compromises and personal commitments. As President Manuel Quezon said: 'My loyalty to my party ends where my loyalty to my country begins.' Now is the time to make a stand," said the nine opposition senators in their statement.

The absence of some opposition senators has further raised skepticism about the opposition's capability of being united and keeping the Senate "independent and a counterweight to Malacañang's excesses."

After the non-event, Lacson said it had become a real possibility that some opposition members intended to strike an alliance with administration senators.

'Good luck'

"To those who will cross over, I wish them luck. I hope they will be able to explain their action to the people who voted for them, for their values and convictions. We who attended yesterday's meeting as we all agreed to do so shall stick together whether as a majority or minority members of the 14th Congress when it opens on July 23," said Lacson in a mobile phone text message.

The opposition senators held several caucuses after the elections during which they agreed to pick a common candidate for Senate president among themselves and single out the leaders of the committees for whom they will vote once Congress opens in order to maximize their superiority in numbers.

One of the senators, who refused to be identified, believed that a "Manny Majority" was being formed by Villar with five opposition or independent senators—Escudero, Pangilinan, Cayetano, Pia Cayetano, and Gringo Honasan—and seven administration senators—Richard Gordon, Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon Revilla Jr., Lito Lapid, Joker Arroyo, and Edgardo Angara.

Enrile had predicted on Thursday that Villar would retain the presidency with at least 13 votes in the bag.

Palace event confirms GMA is for JDV

By Michael Lim Ubac

WHILE THE PALACE IS MUM ABOUT THE choice of President Macapagal-Arroyo for the speakership, another solon yesterday confirmed that the President has indeed given her support to the bid of Speaker Jose de Venecia for a record fifth term as leader of the House of Representatives.

"She told us that we have the numbers and she is for Joe (de Venecia)," said Ilocos Norte Rep. Roque Ablan, a senior member of the so-called "Northern Alliance" bloc in the House.

Erasing doubts

Ablan said the President made the statement after officiating the mass oath-taking of De Venecia and some 100 members of the ruling Lakas-CMD, Nationalist People's Coalition, Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, Liberal Party-Atienza wing and the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas at the Palace yesterday.

The speakership is also being contested by Cebu Rep. Pablo Garcia, a member of the President's party, Kabalikat nf Malayang Pilipino (Kampi).

Ablan said the President also reiterated to the newly elected and reelected congressmen that "this was the commitment she had with Joe even before (this speakership row). That was her statement to us."

He said this should put to rest any doubt that De Venecia still enjoyed the confidence of the President.

But Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye clarified that the President was not interfering in the internal affairs of Congress.

"The President has always maintained that the House of Representatives is an independent and co-equal branch, and the executive should not meddle in the internal affairs of the House," said Bunye in an ambush interview at the Palace.

Earlier, Deputy House Speaker and Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson claimed that the President has "already committed' to De Venecia.

Singson said the President made the commitment during a lunch meeting with the Northern Alliance group of political leaders in Vigan on Thursday.

'Disinformation'

Three Kampi stalwarts, however, belied Singson's claim, dismissing it as "yet another attempt on the part of De Venecia and his minions to sow disinformation."

Kampi president Rep. Luis Villafuerte slammed Singson for "putting words" into the mouth of the President that were the exact opposite of her official stance on the speakership issue.

Villafuerte said the President herself had said countless times before that she'll stay neutral in the issue of the speakership.

Two other Kampi members, Representatives Jose Solis and Amado Bagatsing, pointed out that based on Singson's statements, the De Venecia camp is trying to fool the President no less by claiming that De Venecia already has the support of the majority of congressmen as speaker.

"If De Venecia really has the numbers, why then is he panicking to the extent of resorting to deceit, inventing a list of supporters and claiming he already has the support of the President?" asked Bagatsing.

No confirmation

Bunye himself could not confirm Singson's claim.

"I'm not sure. That was a claim of the personalities who was there supposedly privy to the event. But I was not there, so I cannot confirm that."

"She has not indicated any choice as far as I know, and she has maintained that the House is an independent body," Bunye said.

Ablan and Singson are both members of the Northern Alliance.

But De Venecia himself confirmed the President's statement, saying "The President (yesterday) said Garcia came too late and we have the overwhelming majority."

With victory in sight, De Venecia threw an instant party at his house in Forbes Park for some close allies.

"We all came from Malacañang and some of us went straight to my house. Many of them heard the President say that she's for me," said De Venecia.

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GMA orders probe of Subic fuel smuggling

By Ansbert Joaquin
Inquirer Central Luzon

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT—PRESIDENT MACApagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered officials of the Bureau of Customs and other anti-smuggling agencies to go after smuggling syndicates following reports that at least 51 million liters of fuel are unaccounted for in this freeport.

"We are undertaking a strong and steady effort to curb graft and corruption…We do not tolerate smuggling in Subic or anywhere else," Ms Arroyo said during a visit to the freeport.

"Let us make our economy more business-friendly—friendly to legitimate businesses and unfriendly to crooked businessmen."

Transactions reviewed

Ms Arroyo said she was instructing the Bureau of Customs and other anti-smuggling task forces "to crack down on those involved in what has just been reported to me these past few days (about) unliquidated 51 million liters of fuel here in Subic."

Ms Arroyo inaugurated the Subic-Cawag-Balaybay Road that will connect the shipyard of the Hanjin Heavy Industries and Construction Co. Ltd. (HHIC) at Subic to a community of farmers and fishermen.

Armand Arreza, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority administrator, confirmed that 51 million liters of fuel remained unliquidated by an oil trading firm based here.

Arreza declined to name the firm, saying the SBMA was reviewing the transactions of the nine oil trading firms doing business at the freeport.

In Manila, Customs commissioner Napoleon Morales said he had already ordered an investigation into unaccounted for fuel. With reports from Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon, and Edson C. Tandoc in Manila

PROBING KILLINGS

EU team meets CHR, AFP execs

By Jocelyn R. Uy and Christine O. Avendaño

A TEAM FROM THE EUROPEAN UNION MET yesterday with officials of the Commission on Human Rights and the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to discuss possible assistance in solving the unabated extrajudicial killings in the country.

Ambassador Alistair MacDonald, head of the EU mission, yesterday clarified that the team was not conducting an investigation into the extra-judicial killings which was the sole responsibility of the Philippine government.

"Resolving and putting a stop to these killings is the responsibility only of the Philippine government and not of any foreign agency... [we are here] to encourage the government [of doing its responsibility] and assist where we can," MacDonald told the INQUIRER after a dialogue with CHR officials yesterday afternoon.

The EU delegation is composed of three officials from the EU Commission and one expert each from Sweden, Finland, Spain, Germany and Italy.

Limited task

MacDonald clarified that the team's task was only limited to studying the process and the development of these cases in court, how the government handles them and from there, draw up appropriate technical support to fine-tune this process.

The team—composed of police investigators, international human rights and humanitarian law experts—will hold dialogues with representatives of various government agencies in the field to understand how they work, assess their strengths and weaknesses and find out the "gaps" that needed to be filled.

"The mission is not so much on the cases themselves but rather the process which the cases are handled...how the government are treating these issues and how does an incident move through the process until it becomes a trial and later a conviction [or acquittal]," he said.

The team will hold dialogues with various government agencies in the Bicol Region and in Central Luzon, particularly in Sorsogon and Pampanga, respectively.

The EU team met with top military officials in Camp Aquinaldo yesterday.

EU assistance

During the dialogue, the military asked the visiting EU mission for assistance to boost its investigative capabilities in solving political killings.

"They were here to find out the needs of the AFP and in turn a briefing was given to them," AFP deputy spokesperson Capt. Ramon Zagala told reporters after the meeting.

AFP Human Rights Office chief Col. Benedicto Jose said his office sought assistance in acquiring forensics equipment, more training of AFP personnel on human rights and scholarships for military trainers.

"If we have the capability to investigate, we can solve the cases," Jose said.

The EU experts are expected to come up with a report "in a couple of months" and provide assistance—either short-term or long-term—after reading through the "massive documentations" gathered from the mission.

The report, MacDonald said, would be discussed and reviewed in a dialogue in Brussels and later in Manila.

Today, the EU team will meet with civil society groups.

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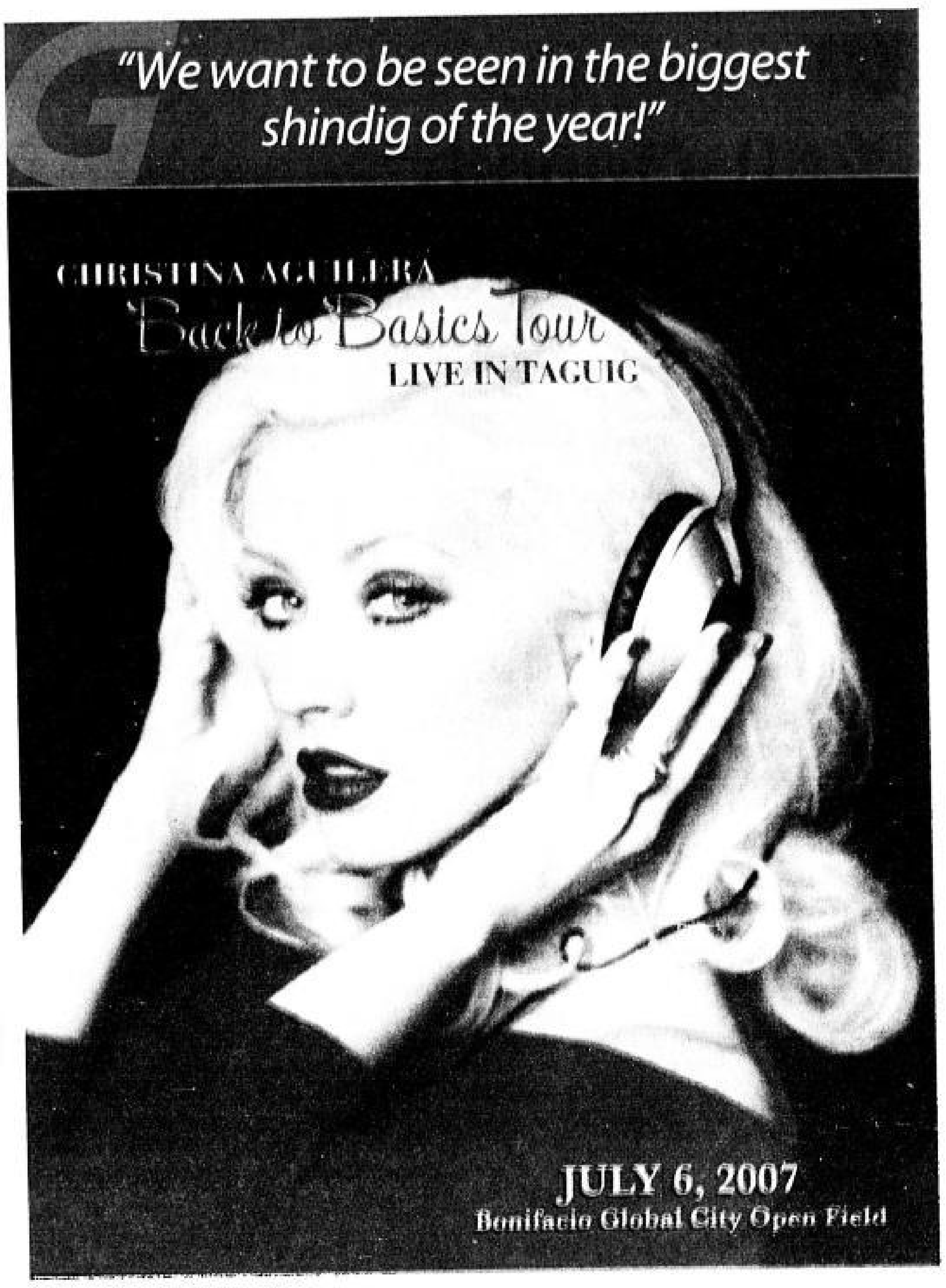
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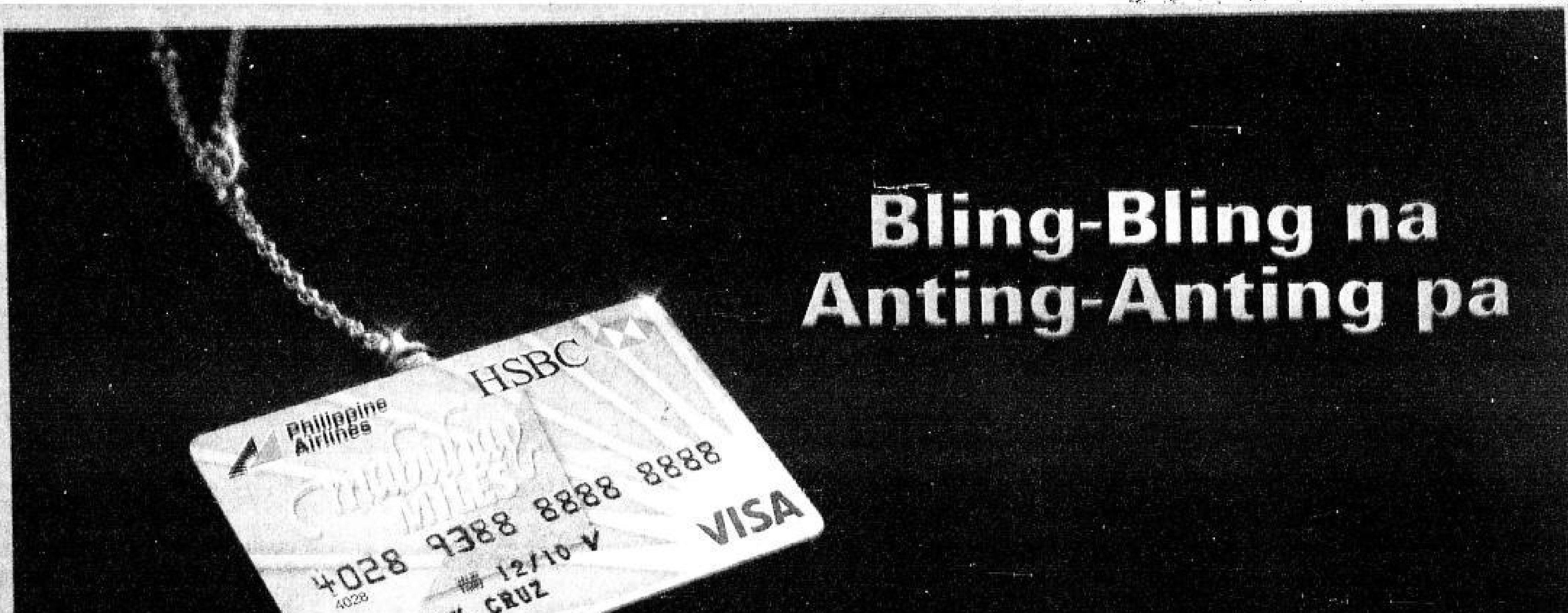

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P200 a month for a house and lot

By Cynthia D. Balana

HOUSES AND LOTS FOR ONLY P200 a month for the first five years and payable in 30 years await 1,000 squatter families in Taguig City who are willing to become the first batch of relocatees to the government resettlement site in Trece Martires, Cavite.

This was announced by Vice President Noli de Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), during his consultation with railway families in Taguig on Thursday.

A total of 4,000 squatters or 2,000 poor families in Taguig will be affected by the rail improvement project under the Southrail Linkage Project.

National Housing Authority (NHA) general manager Federico Laxa said the first 1,000 volunteers would get the best units in the Cavite relocation site. The houses are payable in 30 years with a one year moratorium upon transfer.

Monthly amortization is initially set at P200 per month for the first five years. The rate is gradually increased every five years with the maximum monthly amortization not to exceed P1,000 before the term ends.

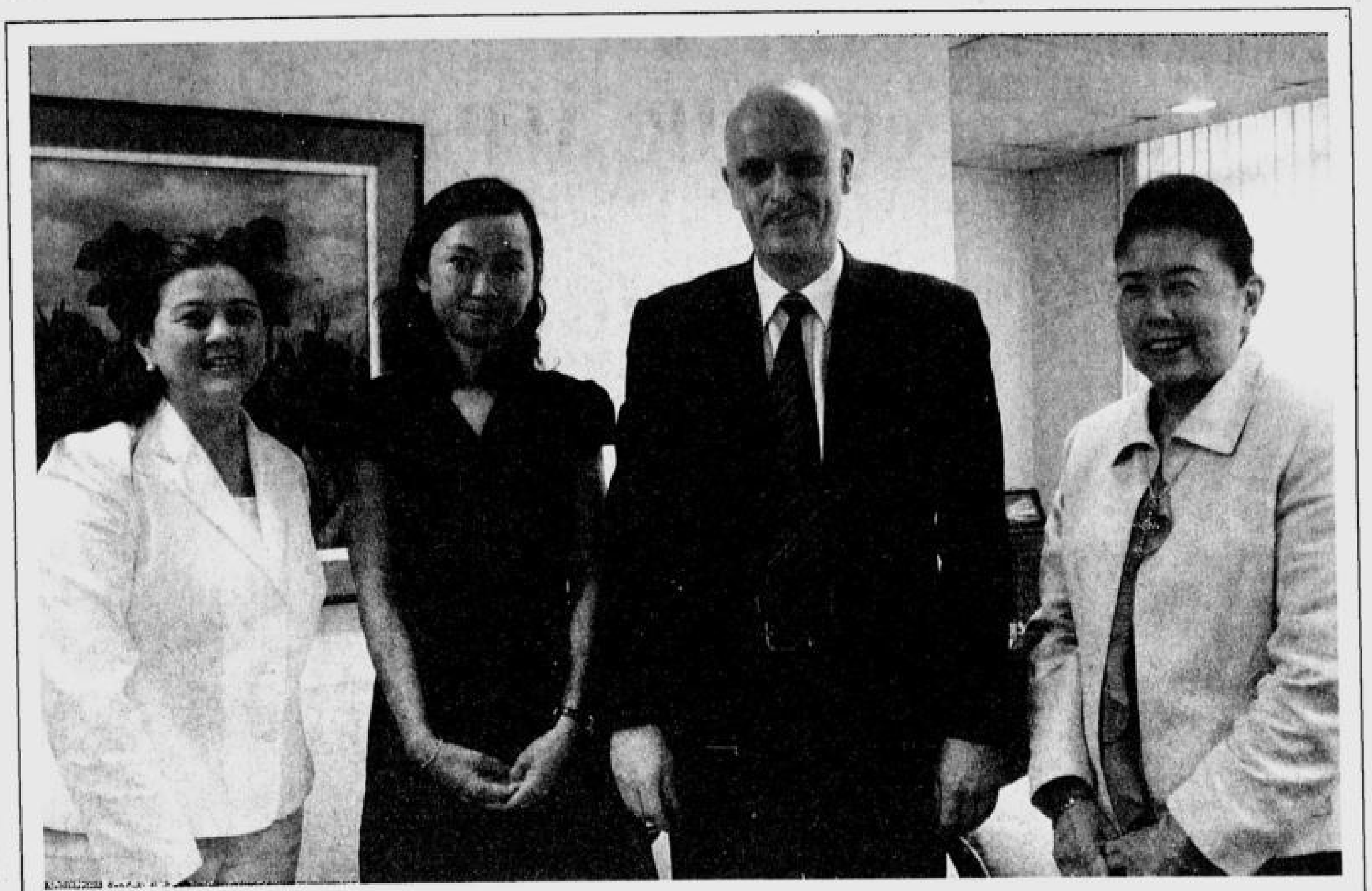
De Castro conducted the consultation as the Taguig local government and HUDCC prepare for the clearing operations of the city's railways as part of the Southrail Linkage Project. De Castro earlier conducted a similar consultation meeting with residents of Manila railways.

He said the Trece Martirez resettlement site is already complete, with the houses now ready for occupancy, and the power and water facilities already in place.

De Castro said the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (Tesda) in bringing livelihood in relocation sites.

He said the government was aware that many of the relocated families would need new jobs or sources of income the moment they transfer into their new homes.

De Castro likewise assured parents that students that they would not be affected by the relocation because the program prioritized the school facilities for the children.



PEACE ADVOCATES
Uwe Morawetz, chair of the Vienna-based International Peace Foundation, visits the INQUIRER for a briefing on "Bridges—Dialogues Towards a Culture of Peace" which will be held in the Philippines from November this year until April next year with six Nobel laureates addressing the various events. Receiving Morawetz and Supaporn Manitpornsut, Bridges public relations and administration (center) during Thursday's visit are INQUIRER president and CEO Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Chair Marixi Prieto. ROMY HOMILLADA

MAGNET FOR ECO-TOURISM

Giants of the deep take limelight

DONSOL, SORSOGON—THE ENORMOUS grey whale shark glides effortlessly in the murky waters off Donsol, its distinctive pale yellow spotted back and fins clearly visible as excited tourists prepare to enter the water from nearby outrigger.

They swim to within a few meters of these gentle giants of the deep as their guide makes sure they give the whale shark plenty of room to move.

The world's largest fish, some as big as a school bus and weighing up to 30 tons, are not aggressive.

"But it's advisable not to get too close in case they decide to turn over," Angela Quiros, a marine biologist and one of the country's leading experts on the whale shark, told AFP recently.

Whale sharks have been a common site in the waters off this coastal town for as long as anyone here can remember, feasting on the rich plankton between January and June.

Once hunted for its soft white meat, known throughout Southeast Asia as "tofu shark," the whale shark is now protected and has transformed this sleepy corner of the region into a major eco-tourism center.

'Butanding' law

"Since 1998 when the government passed a law protecting the whale shark, known locally as 'butanding,' tourism and revenue numbers have shot up dramatically," said local tourism coordinator Salvador Adrao.

WHALE SHARK: Gentle giant, tourist attraction AFP

Last year, almost 11,000 tourists visited Donsol, up from around 900 in 1998. Revenues from eco-tourism have risen to an estimated P12 million, from P454,875 in the same period.

"Swimming with whale sharks has transformed Donsol from a sleepy fishing village into an eco-tourism center," Adrao said.

"The only problem we have is the infrastructure. We can't cope with the tourism numbers we now have, let alone any increase." Compared to some of the more developed areas for whale shark watching such as Ningaloo Reef off Western Australia, Donsol is still very cheap.

"That's why the tourists, especially the foreigners, come to Donsol," he said.

Changing attitudes

Ten years ago environmentalists fought a bitter campaign to end the slaughter of the whale shark, forcing the government to pass a law protecting the creature.

"I can't believe how this place has changed," said Karina Escudero, an underwater film maker and one of the original campaigners for the protection of the whale shark.

"The attitudes of the local people toward conservation rather than killing has been quite extraordinary. They can see the value in protecting these magnificent creatures. People come from all over the world just to see and swim with them.

"The publicity we gave to the senseless slaughter just hit a chord and people reacted. Villagers even managed to free two whale sharks that had been tied by their tails to coconut trees as they floundered in shallow water off a local beach.

"You can still see them today off Donsol. They are easy to identify as they still have the rope around their tails. We call them Big Lucky and Little Lucky." One local fisherman said: "There was a time when the butanding was considered a pest. They would plough through our nets driving away smaller fish.

Better picture

"Tourism has changed all that. Now we see the value in protecting them. Not only Filipinos but people from around the world come to swim with these giant fish."

Quiros and a small team of marine biologists and volunteers have spent more than a week photographing, measuring and taking tissue samples from the whale sharks for genetic analysis.

"It will help us build a better picture of the whale shark," said Deni Ramirez, a marine biologist from Mexico who specializes in whale shark genetics.

The program is the first of its kind in the Philippines and is being partly financed by Mexico-based cement multinational CEMEX Philippines Foundation and Conservation International. *AFP*

8 Mike A accusers face arrest

By DJ Yap

EIGHT OF THE JOURNALISTS WHO SUED the President's husband, Jose Miguel Arroyo, for millions in damages may face arrest after they failed to appear at yesterday's hearing of the class-action suit.

Arroyo's lawyer, Ruy Alberto Rondain, asked the Makati judge hearing the case to order the arrest of the journalists for not complying with the subpoenas issued to them to appear as "hostile witnesses" for Arroyo's defense.

The lawyer asked Judge Zenaida Galapate-Laguilles of the Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 143 to cite the journalists in contempt and to pay him the legal costs of their absence.

"I charge P4,000 an hour, and I estimate it's been three hours, so that's what each of them owes me," Rondain said.

The eight, including INQUIRER columnists Conrad de Quiros and Ramon Tulfo, were issued subpoenas to testify during the hearing of Arroyo's affirmative defenses, a legal process that could lead to the dismissal of the case.

The others subpoenaed were Maritess Vitug, Ricky Carandang, Erwin Tulfo, Mia Gonzalez, William Esposo and Lito Banayo.

Held in abeyance

Laguilles said she would "hold in abeyance" any sanction on the journalists, pending resolution of a motion to quash filed by Roger Rayel, one of the lawyers representing the complainants.

Rayel sought the junking of the subpoenas issued to his clients, arguing that the intended testimonies of the plaintiffs were "irrelevant" and would only delay the proceedings.

The lawyer also cited alleged procedural lapses in the service of the subpoenas, noting that they were coursed through the Roque and Butuyan Law Offices, instead of being personally served at the addresses of each of the journalists.

But Rondain argued that the plaintiffs' own amended complaint stated that all communications should be sent to the law offices for convenience's sake.

Rondain, at one point during the hearing, said he would ask De Quiros if Arroyo ever filed a libel complaint against him.

De Quiros was not among the more than 40 members of the press whom Arroyo had charged with libel, but he had said he would join the suit since it was an action of the Philippine press as an institution.

'Social experiment'

Laguilles reset the hearing on affirmative defenses to July 26. She also ordered Rayel to furnish the court with a list of the addresses of all the complainants, though the lawyer said he would file a motion to oppose that.

On May 23, the complainants—a total of 36 journalists and three media organizations—said they intended to pursue the charge despite Arroyo's announcement that he would drop all the libel cases he had lodged against members of the media.

The class suit, which the journalists called a "social experiment," had accused Arroyo of abusing his right to file libel complaints and of curtailing press freedom.

Arroyo, after surviving a high-risk heart surgery, said he was withdrawing the libel cases he filed against journalists over the past several months.

In the libel complaints, Arroyo had maintained that he should be treated like a private citizen, as he did not hold any public office. He also said filing libel cases was his right.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, June 23, 2007
11th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: 2 Cor 12:1-10
Gospel: Matthew 6:24-34

Jesus said to his disciples, "No one can serve two masters; for he will either hate one and love the other, or he will be loyal to the first and look down on the second. You cannot at the same time serve God and money.

"This is why I tell you not to be worried about food and drink for yourself, or about clothes for your body. (...) Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow, they do not harvest and do not store food in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than birds?

"Can any of you add a day to your life by worrying about it? Why are you so worried about your clothes? Look at the flowers in the fields how they grow. They do not toil or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his wealth was clothed like one of these. (...) What little faith you have!

"Do not worry and say: What are we going to eat? What are we going to drink? Or: what shall we wear? The pagans busy themselves with such things; but your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. Set your heart first on the kingdom and justice of God and all these things will also be given to you. Do not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Commentary

Paul goes on, about the visions and dreams he has been graced with, trying to shame them with their boasting. He has known extraordinary revelations and, along with these, he has known a thorn in the flesh that he cannot control, change or get rid of. This thorn humbles him and keeps his pride in check. It frustrates him—he has no control over it and he begs for it to be taken from him. But he is told to rely on God's grace and live with his weakness so that the power of God might be upon him. Are we content with weakness? Paul had one thorn (I suspect he had quite a few)—and we all know some of ours. Do we let God's grace work with them and on them?

Do we serve God alone or do we daily with many other masters: money, security, power, arrogance, prestige and reputation, possessions, independence, anxiety, national security and false patriotism that betrays our home in the kingdom of God here and now?

Do we seek holiness, ask for it, ask others to help us be holy, and strive with others to obey the commands of Jesus? And if we do, do we let God take care of us sometimes or most often through others? And do we return that favor for others?

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10 Navy men suspended

OMBUDSMAN MA. MERCEDITAS N. GUTIERREZ yesterday ordered the six-month preventive suspension of 10 Philippine Navy officers and personnel being investigated for the anomalous disbursement of their command's funds in 2005 and 2006.

The order covered officers and staffers of the Naval Education and Training Command, an attached unit of the Navy based at the San Miguel Naval Station in San Antonio, Zambales.

Suspended were Rear Admiral Constantino Jardiniano, NETC commander; LCdr. Manuel Gimena, commanding officer, headquarters support command; and procurement and supply officers identified as Lt. Daniel Labrador; Ensign Annaleen Magdaraog; Edmundo Baluca, Lt. Joel Tamayo, Staff Sgt. G.M. Labaguis, Victoria Buhia, Rosemarie Siquinia, and Ensign RN Guillermo.

An investigation panel found that the respondents conspired to produce spurious documents to cover up unliquidated cash advances totaling P478,837 in 2005 and P512,587 the next year. *Volt Contreras*

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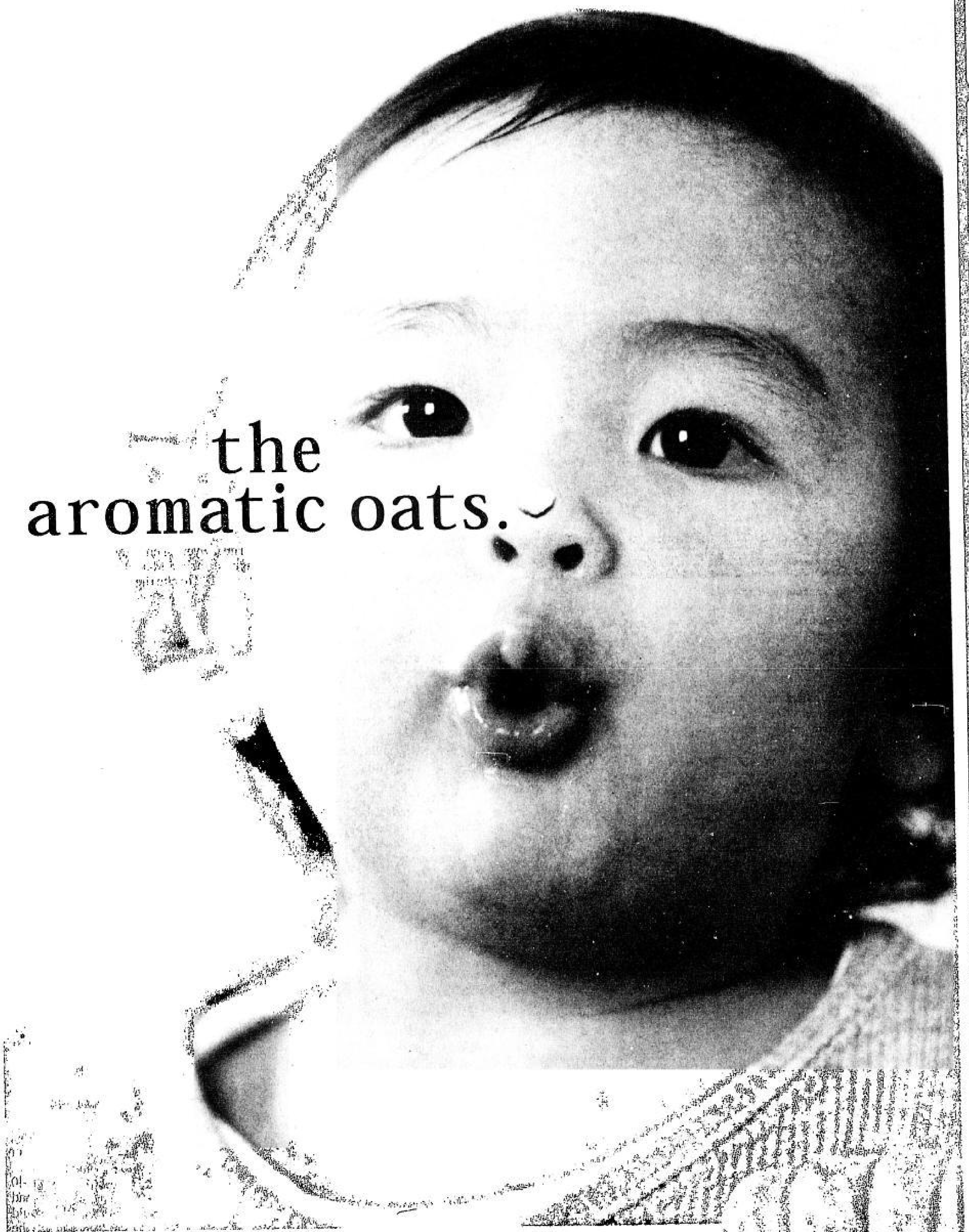

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MARK Jimenez with sister Diana Crespo

OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE

Mark Jimenez sues Gonzalez

By Jocelyn R. Uy

FORMER MANILA REP. MARK Jimenez yesterday sued Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez for abuse of discretion after the latter ordered the preliminary investigation of a case involving Jimenez to be transferred to the Department of Justice.

Accompanied by his counsel, Frank Chavez, Jimenez filed a complaint with the Office of the Ombudsman yesterday, further asking that the antigraft body investigate Gonzalez, who was allegedly using his position in a "personal vendetta" against him.

The complaint was prompted by Gonzalez's order that the complaints of estafa and falsification, which the former Manila official filed against Myla Villanueva, Generoso Villanueva and Marcel Crespo at the Makati prosecutor's office last month, be handled by designated DOJ prosecutors.

The directive took effect after Gonzalez apparently found merit to a letter-request sent by one of the respondents.

Jimenez claimed that he was not informed of the request, denying him the chance to oppose and to present "strong legal and factual grounds."

After "taking control" of the case, Gonzalez ordered the lifting of the Bureau of Immigration watchlist earlier issued against the respondents and instead placed him in the watchlist, Jimenez said.

Jimenez said there was a pattern in Gonzalez's conduct against him. He said this was not the first instance that the justice secretary demonstrated an "unusual predilection" to intervene in cases involving him.

Jimenez cited the case of his estranged wife Caroline Castañeda-Jimenez filed at the Pasig Regional Trial Court asking for the issuance of a temporary and permanent protection order against him.

Jimemez said that Gonzalez caused the implementation and execution of a rescue order, removing his ex-wife from a drug rehabilitation center.

"[Gonzalez] has utilized the vast powers and influence of his public office to advance his personal feud and grudge against [me] in order to harass, vex and oppress [me]," he said.

Jimenez also claimed that Gonzalez did not conceal his "rancor and enmity" towards him by calling him "delusional," an "ex-convict" and a "tax evader."

Raps vs Gringo dismissed

From page A1

ator-elect Honasan is weak. So that's the reason why the charges were dropped," Bunye told reporters.

Honasan, who led coup attempts against the administration of then President Corazon Aquino in the late 1980s, is out on bail for the coup d'etat charge. He was granted bail in time for the tail-end of the election campaign period.

Last month, he filed a petition for review before the DOJ seeking to reverse the panel's decision to indict him.

Honasan is supposedly on vacation with his family.

"We did not expect it," his lawyer, Daniel Gutierrez, said of the dismissal of the case. "At best, we thought the charges would be downgraded, not completely dismissed."

"The senator is very happy and relieved. That's basically it. Finally he's been vindicated, and justice has been served," Gutierrez told the INQUIRER on the phone.

The military, which helped in the dramatic capture of Honasan late last year, declined to comment on the DOJ resolution.

"We cannot issue a reaction. It's already beyond the level of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. We cannot question the wisdom of the court," AFP information chief Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro said.

The Army spokesperson, Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres, said the Army would not comment until it had full knowledge of the basis of the DOJ decision.

"In the meantime, the Army remains committed to its mandate of protecting the people while fully respecting our judiciary," Torres said.

Prepared for objections

Gonzalez said he was prepared for objections to his decision to clear Honasan.

"People will always have questions. Either they will agree or disagree with it. If they disagree with it, they have questions, just like in any decision even in the Supreme Court," he told reporters.

To the question of whether there was political accommodation of Honasan, Gonzalez said: "There's none. I never talked to the President about this."

He said the resolution was written by DOJ prosecutors and issued by the office of Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, and that he affirmed it and made additions to it.

Asked if Malacañang welcomed the dismissal of the case against Honasan, Bunye said: "It's not whether it's welcome or not. It's a question of whether the evidence available supports the charges. The DOJ obviously acted on the basis of the evidence because if the evidence were strong, I don't think that would be the action of the DOJ."

He said the President's meeting with Honasan had nothing to do with the dismissal of the case: "I don't think so. As far as we know, this is an objective appraisal of the evidence, and obviously the DOJ believes that the evidence against Senator-elect Honasan was weak."

Free speech

In the resolution, Gonzalez said the blood compact between Honasan and the military officers who joined the mutiny and his launch of his National Recovery Program (NRP) that espoused violence to reform the government did not show that he directly participated in the takeover of the Oakwood serviced apartments in Makati City (since renamed Ascott) on July 23, 2003.

"If Senator Honasan and his NRP served as an inspiration and rallying figure for the soldiers at Oakwood, this was not a personal participation in the swift attack, the intimidation, threat, strategy or stealth actually displayed, and which was directed against the duly constituted authorities," Gonzalez said.

According to Gonzalez, Honasan's NRP and promotion of the need to use force to overthrow the administration are "acts covered by the free speech clause."

But he told reporters in an interview that if someone wanted to "dig dirt," a case for inciting to sedition may be filed against Honasan.

Gonzalez said the blood compact, which took place on June 4, 2003, in San Juan following a meeting where Honasan promoted his NRP, was not intended to specifically recruit soldiers to mass at Oakwood and take over the government. He said there was no evidence showing there were plans then to seize the building.

Honasan's launch of his NRP at Plaza Miranda in Manila about a month before the mutiny was not part of the coup attempt either, Gonzalez said.

"One does not plan for a coup or start it in one of the most public places in the country," he said.

'Overt acts not shown'

Gonzalez also said witnesses' testimonies alleging that Honasan had taken part in an "intricate and comprehensive plan" to recruit soldiers to overthrow the government through violence, force or armed struggle were insufficient to indict the senator-elect.

"This is [Honasan's] only link to the charge based on the complainant's evidence. As stated, overt acts are not shown, much less proven," he said.

Gonzalez said police evidence—the diskettes, documents and other equipment later gathered from Oakwood that referred to a certain "Kuya," believed to be Honasan—likewise did not show that the latter took part in the mutiny.

He also said discussions on the use of force to achieve a reform program should not cloud the investigation's focus, which was the daylong takeover of the building:

"The advocacy was distant or far-removed in both time and space from the actual coup at Oakwood, Makati City.

"Advocacy must center on producing the imminent coup at Oakwood itself if the prosecution ... is to progress. It cannot be a general discussion of so many topics covered by a national recovery or reform program, even if one of those topics is the impending necessity, to resort to force in order to achieve reform."

Proof of the pudding

Gutierrez dismissed any suggestion of a deal between Honasan and the Arroyo administration.

"The proof of the pudding is in the eating. He will remain independent, but at the same time he will be non-obstructive," the lawyer said.

Gutierrez said he was thankful that Justice Secretary Gonzalez had recognized the merit of their case.

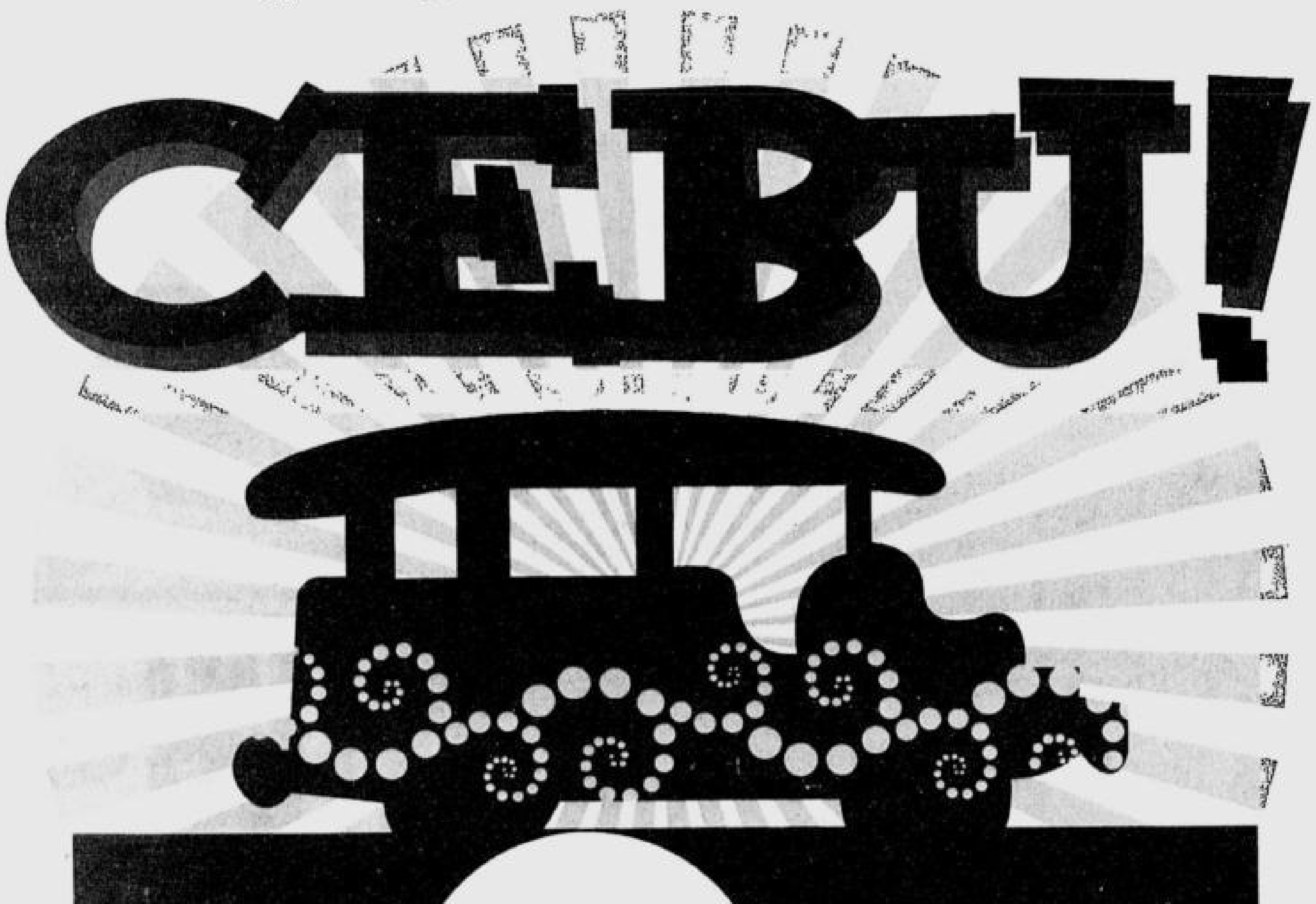
He said he phoned his client upon hearing the news: "He was very happy. He told me people had started [extending] their congratulations."

The INQUIRER tried to reach Honasan through his mobile phone, but a member of his staff who answered the call said the senator-elect was unavailable for interviews.

Bunye expressed the hope that Honasan and other senators would back the President's legislative agenda.

"This is not only for Senator-elect Honasan but for all the rest: We hope that they will support all the proposals that will move the country forward, especially proposals that are pro-poor, pro-investment and pro-growth," he said. *With reports from Juliet Labog-Javellana, DJ Yap and Christine O. Avendaño*

GoNegosyo Caravan Goes To



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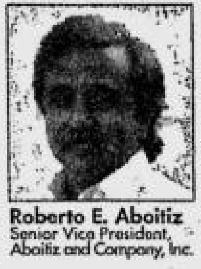

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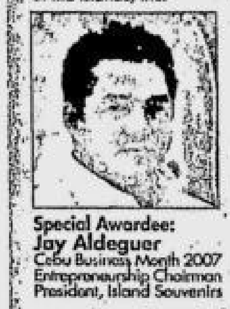

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STAR INQUIRER MANILA BULLETIN GMA

Atong Ang seeks court OK to visit family in US

AFTER BEING RELEASED FROM JAIL on probation, Charlie "Atong" Ang now wants to visit his family in the United States.

Ang, through his counsel, Ruth Castelo, asked the Sandiganbayan Special Division yesterday to allow him to leave for Las Vegas, Nevada where he plans to stay for 20 days with his family.

Castelo said Ang plans to leave the country on July 15 and stay in the US until Aug. 5.

The former gambling buddy of detained President Joseph Estrada was released on probation last month after pleading guilty of bribing an official in Estrada's plunder trial.

Ang's short visit to the US would also allow him to pay off debts and other financial obligations he incurred since his arrest in the US in 2002, she added.

The antigraft court allowed the convicted former "consultant" of Estrada to go free but on probation for the next two years after the prosecution raised no objections and found no risk that he might flee.

Ang eluded a possible 40-year prison term by entering into a compromise deal with prosecutors in which he agreed to return to the government his P25 million take from the P130 million tobacco excise tax that he and Estrada allegedly "diverted" in 1998. He also vowed to testify for the state in cases he "has personal knowledge of."

Jocelyn R. Uy

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Bedol missing again as day of reckoning nears

From page A1

ma fumed at the Comelec resolution ordering the transfer of the canvassing to Shariff Aguak, citing the danger of going to Maguindanao, a stronghold of the powerful Ampatuan political clan.

De Lima said the decision was "indicative of railroading, staged, and planned" to favor TU's Juan Miguel Zubiri, who has been trying to oust Genuine Opposition candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III from 12th place and get into the winning circle.

"It is very apparent from the confluence of events and circumstances," De Lima said.

SC to act before June 30

Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno told the INQUIRER the high tribunal would act before June 30 on a petition filed by Pimentel to exclude Maguindanao votes from the final Senate tally. June 30 is when the newly elected senators will assume office.

Pimentel leads Zubiri by over 110,000 votes in the last Comelec tally but tallies from Maguindanao—uncounted nearly 40 days after the elections—could topple him from 12th spot.

De Lima said she was surprised to learn that the Comelec en banc had decided in Resolution No. 8195 to transfer the canvassing from Manila to Shariff Aguak.

"That was why they (the poll officials) were in General Santos City partly for security reasons," she said, referring to last Wednesday's hearing held by the Comelec when it collected copies of the municipal CoCs from the Maguindanao election officers.

Where is Bedol?

"The canvassing is a more important and critical activity. Who will protect and secure us?" De Lima said. "It's one way of saying 'go at your own risk'."

De Lima said that having the canvassing done in Shariff Aguak also meant "making sure that the municipal board of canvassers (MBoC) chairs whom we intend to interrogate in the course of the canvassing will not be able to talk freely and honestly."

"Masyado na silang nanggigipit kay Koko (They are really squeezing Koko)," De Lima said.

'Continued disobedience'

Bedol, who could help resolve the Maguindanao poll mess, is again nowhere to be found, according to Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer, who heads Task Force Maguindanao, which is charged with investigating allegations of cheating during the polls.

"He cannot be found again. We have been trying to get in touch with him, nothing, even on his cell phone," Ferrer said.

Ferrer said Bedol was supposed to have submitted to the Comelec last week a written explanation on the loss of the original copies of the municipal CoCs he had in his safekeeping.

Bedol had told the Comelec that the vote tallies supposed to back TU's claims of a 12-0 sweep in Maguindanao had been stolen from his office.

"But up to now, he has not done so," Ferrer said, adding that Bedol could be held in contempt if he failed to abide by the subpoena and did not appear before the Comelec.

Ferrer added: "His (Bedol's) continued disobedience to the lawful order of the Comelec is valid ground already for his suspension."

The Comelec en banc based its decision to transfer the canvassing to Shariff Aguak on a resolution promulgated on May 18 that "no transfer of the canvassing venue from the provinces to Manila shall be allowed."

Ferrer told reporters the canvassing was transferred to Maguindanao "because that's the place (where it should be held)" and that the canvassing in Manila had ended.

Moreover, Ferrer said the election officers from Maguindanao's 22 towns, whose presence would be vital in the canvassing when lawyers start questioning documents, "are already there."

Handwriting experts

He added that while his task force had found the municipal tallies submitted in General Santos City to be authentic, it would be "up to the special provincial board of canvassers" to find out how authentic they really were.

The special board could even hire handwriting experts to study the signatures and other entries in any questioned tally, he added.

Ferrer himself acknowledged that something might have been amiss in the Maguindanao elections.

"Actually, that's the very reason why we have to go there (to General Santos). We did not go there to enjoy ourselves but to find out what went wrong. If you try to find out what went wrong, that in itself is an admission that you smell something," Ferrer said.

SC to seek Zubiri's side

In a dinner with INQUIRER editors Thursday night, Chief Justice Puno said the high court might first have to hear from the Comelec and from Zubiri before deciding whether to issue a temporary restraining order to stop the Maguindanao canvassing.

The court is expected to deliberate on Pimentel's petition on Tuesday.

"Perhaps the court may also want to hear the other side, give it a specific number of days to make a comment. The petition alleges a lot of facts and we've got to hear the other side also," Puno told INQUIRER editors Thursday night.

GO's warning

GO officials warned the Comelec not to railroad the canvassing of the Maguindanao votes.

They said they could produce election returns from two municipalities in Maguindanao that would disprove the results reported by Bedol that 19 senatorial candidates, including six from GO, got zero votes in the entire province.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who was among those who supposedly got zero votes, said Ferrer could not just jump to the conclusion that the (MCoCs) retrieved by the Comelec were authentic.

GO lawyer Sixto Brillantes said: "We are worried the Comelec might railroad and move fast on this. Probably by Monday something will happen ... You cannot trust too much the current Comelec, especially the chairman." *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan*

CA's 'Big 5's' extortion open secret, says Lacson

From page A1

I'm not aware of any [senator-member of the CA] who would dip his hand into this," he said.

In a phone interview yesterday with the INQUIRER, the 87-year-old Teves said a "clique" of congressmen was involved in the extortion racket.

He referred to the group as the "Big Five" and said its members were not limited to the House contingent at the CA. He also said its members were mostly serving their last terms and sought other positions in the May 14 elections.

Asked if he was referring to outgoing Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, who ran for senator under the administration's Team Unity and lost, Teves said: "Your guess is as good as mine."

"Let those speculating on the matter answer their own question. I will not make any confirmation at this point," he said.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to make contact with Pichay, who heads the House contingent at the CA. His media handler, Ruben Lim, said he was out of the country.

Not covered by immunity

Lacson said the House ethics committee should look into Teves' claims and slap the erring congressmen with a charge of robbery or extortion, which carries the penalty of up to seven years in jail.

"This offense is not covered by the lawmakers' immunity. They can be arrested even during the session," said Lacson, who added that the extortion could be in cash or in kind.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada told reporters that Teves' disclosure was "a big slap" on the members of the CA committee like himself.

Estrada said Teves should name those he knew had been demanding P5 million from Cabinet appointees in exchange for their confirmation.

Lacson said the Cabinet officials who had been victimized by the extortionists should come out and file charges.

Teves told the INQUIRER that he was willing to name names at a proper forum, such as an inquiry by the House committee on good government or an investigation by the Office of the Ombudsman.

"I am willing to testify," he said. "I never run away from a fight."

The CA is composed of 12 representatives of the House and 12 representatives of the Senate.

Also AFP officials

Teves said the Big Five's extortion activities victimized not only Cabinet appointees but also military officials.

"The money demanded depends on the area to which a commander is being assigned," he said in Filipino. "Naturally, the demand is bigger in places where, say, [the illegal numbers game] *'jueteng'* is rampant. The idea is that the commander could easily raise the money from *jueteng*."

In the case of his son, Finance Secretary Margarito "Gary" Teves, he said the extortionists might have felt that he could shell out more money by virtue of his position.

"Maybe they thought that [Gary] had a lot of money because the Bureau of Customs and the Bureau of Internal Revenue were under him. But they are wrong. My son's position is really a sacrifice, not for personal benefit," Teves said.

Common knowledge

Earlier in a TV interview over ANC, Teves was asked if one of the members of the so-called Big Five had run for the Senate. He replied in the affirmative.

Asked if the congressman had lost, he said: "Use your imagination."

Two members of the House named a fellow congressman involved in the supposed extortion activities in the CA.

According to the two lawmakers—a man from the opposition and a woman from the administration—their colleague ran a highly expensive campaign but lost in the midterm elections.

"It's quite common knowledge among congressmen," the female source told the INQUIRER.

The source said their "enterprising" colleague raked in money primarily through the projects of particular departments whose secretaries were up for deliberation by the CA.

She said a common practice was for unscrupulous CA members to demand that versions of such projects be carried out in their respective legislative districts.

If this happened, the lawmaker concerned easily got a portion of the budget allocated for the project, she said.

The other source, the male lawmaker, gave the name of the same congressman based on reports from within the CA. But he asked that the name be withheld until more concrete evidence was available.

'Very attractive'

What is clear is that a big number of lawmakers are eyeing slots in the CA, the female lawmaker said.

She said that soon after the May elections, the number of aspirants for membership in the CA ballooned to at least 63.

"You can only imagine why so many congressmen want to be part of it," she said. "Obviously, there's something in the CA that they find very attractive."

On Thursday, Teves limited his accusation of extortion to members of the House contingent in the CA. But the female lawmaker said the Senate contingent was not necessarily guiltless.

"These illegal activities actually began from the top (the Senate). Those below (the House) simply followed," she said without elaborating.

"The problem is that so many people are trying to project themselves as clean, when they're not," she added.

Father protecting son

Outgoing Iloilo Rep. Rolex Suplico yesterday questioned the timing of Teves' disclosure, saying it was meant only to divert public attention from his son's "blunder" at the Department of Finance.

Suplico, the lone opposition representative in the House contingent in the CA, noted former Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag's attack on Malacañang's economic team for its "unrealistic, failed and bungled policies."

Buñag was recently fired for the Bureau of Internal Revenue's failure to meet its collection target. He described himself as "a sacrificial lamb and a scapegoat."

"The real culprit is the incompetent and bungling [Margarito] Teves," Suplico told the INQUIRER. "We really don't need a papa's boy as secretary of finance. Tax collection is a very serious matter to be left in the hands of a weakling."

Suplico said the revelation of the elder Teves was but "a squid tactic, a classic case of a father protecting his son."

"If there was really extortion, why didn't he expose it right away?" Suplico said.

Isabela Rep. Rodito Albano III aired a similar view in a statement:

"Why only now? There's a public perception that this issue is just being used to divert attention from the intramurals between Secretary Teves and outgoing Revenue Commissioner Jose Buñag. Why involve others in the Teves-Buñag vendetta?"

Name names

Albano, along with House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles and Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez, said the elder Teves should name the CA members who had supposedly demanded money from him in exchange for his son's confirmation.

The price supposedly ranged from P500,000 to P5 million.

"There are 12 congressmen in the CA and Representative Teves' statement has tarnished all their reputations," Nograles said in a statement, adding:

"He must be fair to his colleagues in the House and be specific in his charges."

Said Golez in a text message: "I congratulate [Teves] for his courage, but he should complete his work by naming names to be fair to the innocent members of the CA.

"His statement is an eyewitness account and he is very credible, being one of the most diligent [members] of the 13th Congress."

How to create a 'green house' even in city

From page A1

For starters, one should plan one's house based on topography and the presence of water and other natural elements.

Also, Cruz says, "it is necessary to study the direction of the sun and wind so we can take advantage of these natural gifts."

Careful design

The house should be carefully designed according to one's daily needs and activities in order to cut back on energy consumption and wastage of resources, Cruz says.

Rooms should be properly situated to bring about the most comfortable internal conditions: "To avoid having to switch on your lights during the day, place commonly used spaces in the areas where sunlight is most abundant. Face openings toward the east to maximize the morning sun. Sunlight during this time is not too hot and too harsh, thus preventing extreme heat from entering your house."

Smaller windows should be installed in areas where sunlight is harsh. To keep sunlight from directly penetrating the room, build canopies, trellises and awnings.

To reduce reliance on artificial light sources, Cruz's advice is to install skylights in areas like staircases, kitchens, bathrooms, and sometimes in living rooms—but not in air-conditioned areas.

In warmer parts of the house, install bigger windows and doorways where the wind flows naturally. Rooms with higher ceilings ensure better air circulation, but some homeowners settle for lower ceilings to conserve energy generated by air-conditioning systems.

Buy local, recycled products

To make the house more energy-efficient, Cruz says, buy building materials manufactured locally and with less energy, and patronize recycled and reused products when available.

She is specific: Visit shops on Dapitan Street in Manila that offer used building materials like lumber, steel grills, doors, windows, and even housing accessories, at budget prices.

"Use your creativity when designing your house," she says.

It will help to read the labels before buying materials, she says, to make sure these are not harmful to health and the environment.

If possible, she says, look for an alternative to PVC, the second most commonly used plastic ingredient in water pipes, tiles, door and window sidings, and wallpaper, but is the most toxic of all plastic products.

She adds that it is important to apply lead-free and scent-free paints to lessen one's exposure to chemical substances, and to properly store and dispose of the cans.

More tips

Here are Cruz's other energy-efficient tips:

- Tap solar energy and install solar panels as sources of household electricity (although these are expensive).
- Use low-flush water closets in toilets.
- Install a rainwater harvesting system so the collected water can be used for cleaning, flushing, washing clothes, or watering plants.
- Use gray water to flush toilets.
- Install a wastewater treatment system (if possible).
- Compost kitchen and garden wastes.

Outside the house, grow trees and plants to provide a cooling effect, and vegetables in the garden. Trees and plants also serve as sound buffer in a busy neighborhood, Cruz says.

Quoting the Environmental Bamboo Foundation in Indonesia, she says bamboo releases 35 percent more oxygen than trees. Some species can even arrest 12 tons of carbon dioxide per hectare.

"Incorporating bamboo in your landscape design will not only control light intensity but also protect you from exposure to ultraviolet rays," she says.

Cruz says one does not need to consult an architect to build a green house. The key is logic, as illustrated by the people who build nipa huts in the countryside.

Let cities breathe

Such huts, which have large windows and bamboo floors, are the most environment-friendly structures, she says.

"If you build a green house, you're in a way protecting the environment. It just goes to show that your consciousness of environmental protection is high," Cruz says.

However, she points out, the government should make a parallel move to decentralize dense urban centers, and create recreational and green spaces that would allow cities "to breathe and grow in a healthy manner."

GMA leaves today for Singapore, Equatorial Guinea

From page A1

Equatorial Guinea counterpart for PNOC to acquire a major stake in oil drilling in the African country.

Though it is one of the smallest countries in continental Africa, Equatorial Guinea has 1.28 billion barrels of offshore oil reserves. But the country lacks technical and professional experience in offshore drilling and this is where the Philippines is offering to come in.

World Economic Forum

In Singapore, the President will address the two-day World Economic Forum on East Asia, after which she will make a state visit to the island state and meet with Singapore President S.R. Nathan who visited the Philippines last February.

Ms Arroyo, who is the outgoing chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), will headline the WEF seminar which will focus on the new generation of East Asian multinationals and the impact of cross-border investment, and the durability of East Asia's growth in the face of emerging global risks.

The President attended the WEF in Davos, Switzerland, last January where she cited the emergence of the Asean community as a formidable economic bloc.

Asia up front

Organizers say the WEF meeting is the first of a series of events that will highlight Asia's growing international influence, with Japan hosting the G8 summit of the world's top industrialized nations and China splashing out for the Olympic Games next year.

"Looking ahead in 2008, Asia will be very much on the forefront of the global agenda," said Lee Howell, director and head of the Asia section at the Geneva-based WEF.

But Asia should also heed lessons learned from the financial crisis that shook the region a decade ago and prepare to manage potential risks such as energy security and climate change, he said.

"We will also look a bit back at the crisis 10 years ago—what has changed, what hasn't. And looking forward, we'll look at the shifting power equation where Asia will assume a bigger leadership role," Lee said.

The 1997 crisis was triggered by the collapse of the Thai baht, which was hit by speculative attacks, triggering a massive financial collapse badly affecting regional currencies and stock markets.

"Not only are there many illustrations of Asia's economic ascendance, there are quite a few illustrations of Asia's institutional ascendance," said WEF Asia-Pacific associate director Sushant Rao.

But he added there is room for improvement because in the WEF's latest survey on global competitiveness, only two Asian countries, Japan and Singapore, were on the top 10.

Asean agenda

Carlos Ghosn, president and chief executive of both Renault and Japanese car giant Nissan, will also address the conference.

Ministers and officials from China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam are all expected to attend the seminar, as well as Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath.

The President's state visit to Singapore is aimed at further accelerating the economic relations between the two countries and to invite more Singaporean investments to the Philippines, Malacañang said.

As outgoing Asean chair, Ms Arroyo will be discussing the Asean agenda with Nathan who is the incoming chair of the 10-member regional grouping.

As in other foreign trips, the President will make time to meet members of the Filipino community in Singapore.

She will leave Singapore on June 26 on a chartered PAL flight for Equatorial Guinea where she will stay for only 12 hours. She is expected back on June 27.

Vaccination and blood tests were strictly required for those joining the President's trip so that most of the Palace support staff failed to make the trip.

Malacañang also discouraged the media from joining the trip because of the difficulty in getting visas which had to be obtained from Madrid.

Vaccine shots

The Bureau of Quarantine and the Presidential Security Group made sure that the President's delegation passed the blood tests to determine whether they had the immunity to resist infections or diseases common in the area.

Everyone was required to obtain immunization for Hepa A and B, yellow fever and anti-malaria 10 days before the trip.

PSG chief Brig. Gen. Romeo Prestoza said the President got her vaccine shots from St. Luke's Medical Center last Tuesday.

Bunye said he could not join the trip because he missed the required inoculation period. *Juliet Labog-Javellana and AFP*

Public satisfaction with Cabinet still negative – SWS

PUBLIC SATISFACTION WITH the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo as a whole has remained negative since the third quarter of 2005, according to the Social Weather Stations.

The latest SWS survey, conducted from Feb. 24 to 27 this year, showed that more people are dissatisfied (35 percent) than satisfied (32 percent) with the performance of Ms Arroyo's Cabinet as a whole, for a net satisfaction rating of -2.

The Cabinet's rating this year hardly changed from its net -5 in November and net -3 in September last year. It was at net -6 in December 2005.

The net rating is the difference between the percentage of satisfied and dissatisfied responses.

The last time the Cabinet's net rating was on the positive side was in March 2004.

"The Cabinet often gets lower ratings than the key government institutions," SWS said in a statement released yesterday.

While close to the National Administration's score of net -3, the Cabinet's rating was much lower than that of the Senate (net +26), House of Representatives (net +11) and Supreme Court (net +16).

The Cabinet had its record-high +27 rating in June 1997 and March 1999, and its record low of net -16 in November 1990. The net rating of the Cabinet tends to mirror that of the National Administration, according to SWS.

"The Cabinet's Net scores in the last three quarters were slightly better than the Net -5 to -10 obtained from August 2005 to June 2006, but lower than the Net +12 at the start of President Arroyo's second term," SWS said.

During her first term, President Arroyo obtained the highest satisfaction rating at net +17 in July 2001.

Based on past SWS surveys conducted from 2004 to 2007, officials in charge of the social welfare, health, education, tourism, foreign affairs and local government departments tended to get positive marks from the public.

In contrast, those who head the departments of justice, trade and industry, finance and energy departments tended to get negative ratings, along with the press secretary and national security adviser.

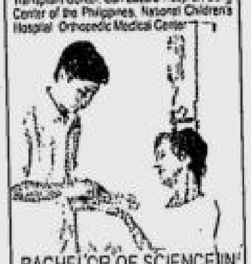
Officials who got positive scores include Health Secretary Francisco Duque III (+15, February 2007), Education Secretary Jesli Lapus (+13, February 2007), Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano (+13, September 2006), Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno (+11, February 2007) and Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto Romulo (+10, May 2005).

Among the Cabinet members who got negative ratings were Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez (-10, March 2006; -2, August 2005), Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye (-15, August 2005), and National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales (-17, December 2005).

Those who got "roughly neutral" public satisfaction ratings include Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes (+5, September 2006), Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez (+2, February 2007), Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita (-1, November 2006) and recently sacked Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag (-4, June 2006).

SWS said these single-digit figures were called 'neutral' because they were "not too different from zero."

The SWS surveys were all conducted using face-to-face interviews with 1,200 adults, divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. They each had a margin of error of plus-or-minus 3 percentage points. *Kate Pedroso, Inquirer Research*



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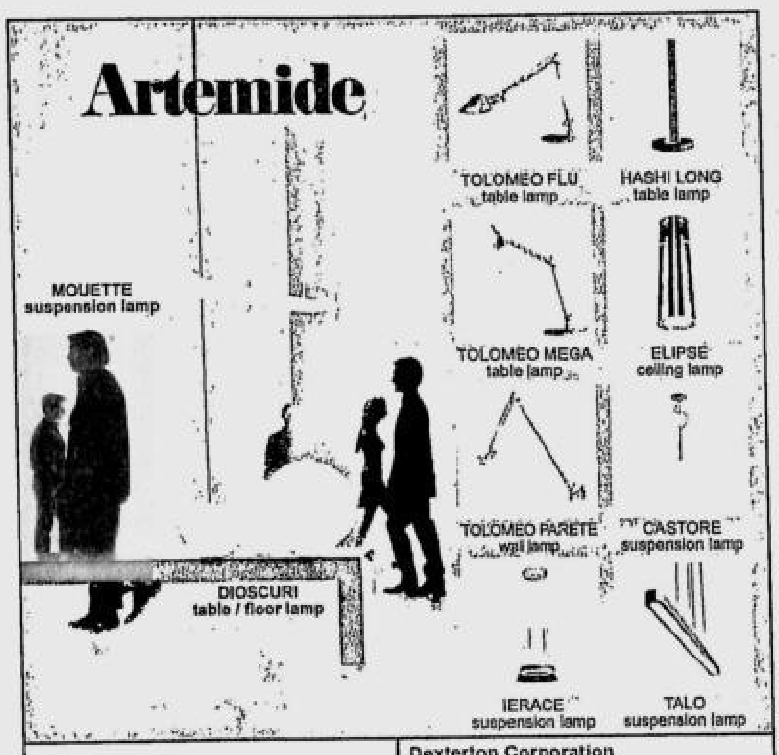

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42" TOSHIBA 42WL66 (106.68cm)	LCD/TV	Php129,950	Php35,000	Php94,950	Php7,913
37" TOSHIBA 37A3000 (93.98cm)	LCD/TV	Php89,950	Php20,000	Php69,950	Php5,829
47" TOSHIBA 47WL68 (119.38cm)	LCD/TV	Php194,950	Php45,000	Php149,950	Php12,496
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07 June 2007

DOH-BFAD HEALTH ADVISORY
No. 2007-003

Subject : WARNING ON UNREGISTERED IMPORTED PROCESSED FOOD, DRUGS, DEVICES AND COSMETICS

The Department of Health-Bureau of Food and Drugs (DOH-BFAD) hereby reiterates its advice to the public to be wary of unregistered processed food, cosmetic, medical device products, as well as, drugs including herbal and Chinese medicines that have been illegally imported and are offered for wholesale or retail. These products were obtained from unknown sources posing doubts on their safety, efficacy, quality and purity. Illegally imported products also rob the government of valuable tax income.

The manufacture, importation, exportation, sale, offering for sale, distribution, or transfer of any drug or device which is **not registered** with the BFAD is strictly prohibited pursuant to Republic Act 3720 as amended by Executive Order No. 175, otherwise known as the Food, Drugs and Devices, and Cosmetics Act, as well as, Republic Act 7394 or the Consumer Act of the Philippines. Likewise, existing rules and regulations of the DOH-BFAD mandatorily require that imported processed food and cosmetics must be registered with the above Office prior to the products' distribution in the local market.

As deterrence, consumers are advised to ask for receipts of payment of purchased products reflecting the business name and address, Tax Identification Number (TIN) and name of printer (BIR Permit No.) with inclusive serial number of booklets and date of issuance of receipts and the description of the goods bought.

Also, consumers are advised to verify the existence of the License to Operate of the establishment/outlet which should be conspicuously displayed and the existence of the applicable BFAD Product Registration No. on the label of the products intended to be bought. The absence of such information is indicative of possible illegal source/product.

Suspected unregistered products as well as sources of such products must be reported to DOH-BFAD (Tel. nos. 807-0725, 807-8275) or the nearest DOH-Center for Health Development (CHDs) or the Health Offices of the Local Government Units.

For further information, please contact the Bureau of Food and Drugs at **tel. no. 842-5606.**

(Sgd.) **PROF. LETICIA-BARBARA B. GUTIERREZ, M.S.**
Director IV

(PDI – June 23, 2007)

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When will China bubble burst?

From page A1

may be overheating and are taking steps to cool investment and lending, but to little avail. An attempt in late May to rein in surging stock prices sent shares tumbling for a couple days before they resumed their climb.

The likely trigger of a crisis, should it erupt, would be a pile-up of bad loans in a weak banking system, analysts say.

"The banking system is still based on collateral and the collateral is all overvalued," says Andy Xie, an independent economist based in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

"If the bubble bursts, then you will have a banking crisis like Japan in 1990," he says. "The question is how China can manage after the bubble."

Given China's growing role in global manufacturing, financial markets and commodities, the repercussions of such a collapse would be far-reaching.

Easy money

While there are differences between Japan's asset price bubble and China's situation today, the similarities are instructive.

Easy money from Japan's banks led to an estimated US$3 trillion in investment in new plants, hotels and a glut of golf courses. Real estate prices soared.

Domestic investors piled into stocks, seeking higher returns than the paltry interest paid on savings accounts. The value of the Tokyo stocks soared from $2.6 trillion in late 1987 to $4.5 trillion at the market's peak in late 1989.

When the orgy of speculative trading collapsed after the Bank of Japan tightened monetary policy, a decade-long slowdown ensued.

In China today, many of the same factors are also at work—low returns on bank savings, cheap capital, soaring stock prices and relentlessly surging property prices. In just two years, the value of shares traded in Shanghai and Shenzhen has skyrocketed to about 17 trillion yuan ($2.2 trillion) from 3.2 trillion yuan ($393 billion at the 2005 exchange rate).

So far, there are no obvious signs of a crisis. Exports keep growing and average incomes are rising. But under the edifice of robust growth lie serious strains.

'Sweet spot'

"Right now, we're in a sweet spot. Everything is as good as it can get," says Michael Pettis, a professor at Peking University's Guanghua School of Management and author of a book on financial crises in emerging economies. But he adds, "Nobody should assume it's going to stay like this. No country in history went through such a rapid period of growth without periodic crises."

China's banks are actually in better shape today than they have been ever been—at least by official figures. They show nonperforming loans at about 7 percent of total lending in the first quarter of 2007, down from estimates of 40-50 percent a few years ago.

But some of the decline in bad loans reflects the surge in overall lending. And the figures exclude so-called "special mention loans" on the verge of going bad. Including those, plus bad loans already written off, the total amount of problem loans may be triple the figure for the narrower category of nonperforming loans, according to some estimates.

"The risk is still there. We walk around. We see so many empty buildings in Beijing. We know that there's something going on that may not just be being recorded," said Charlene Chu, a Fitch Ratings analyst in Beijing.

New bank loans totaled a staggering 2.1 trillion yuan ($275 billion; euro207 billion) in January-May, already two-thirds of the total issued in all of 2006. In mid-May, the government tightened bank credit and raised interest rates for the fourth time in a year after reporting that investment in construction and factories was still growing by double digits.

Go-go China

As in late 1980s Japan, bank loans, often made with scant regard for risk, are often guaranteed by collateral whose value is exaggerated by surging real estate prices, Xie says.

Today's go-go China is something of an economic Never-Never Land. Reliable data on credit risk and bankruptcies are virtually nonexistent, making it hard to know when a crisis might strike.

However, unlike Thailand, South Korea and Indonesia, which were left owing billions of dollars in foreign debts when their currencies collapsed in 1997, China has kept strict controls on its capital markets—insulating them from most external shocks.

Awash in cash

Moreover, thanks largely to its soaring trade surplus and booming economy, China is awash in cash. Its foreign currency reserves, at $1.2 trillion, are the world's biggest. Beijing could easily dip into those to preempt a brewing crisis.

But Chinese authorities face a precarious balancing act in shepherding the world's fourth-largest economy, which grew a sizzling 11.1 percent in the first quarter. Beijing needs strong growth to lift millions out of poverty.

"China is like a giant elephant riding a bicycle—it has to maintain a fast speed, otherwise it will crash," economist Zhang Chunyue quipped in a recent commentary in the state-run newspaper China Daily.

Meanwhile, inflation is creeping up, rising to a two-year high of 3.4 percent in May.

It's still bull market

The stock market suffered only a brief setback last month when authorities tripled a trading tax. The Shanghai index is still up 54 percent this year while the Shenzhen Composite Index, for China's smaller, second market, is up 120 percent.

"It's still a bull market," says Chen Huiqin, an analyst from Nanjing-based Huatai Securities Co.

There's little risk that a big stock correction alone would trigger a financial crisis, given the limited proportion of shares in household wealth and corporate fund raising, although a crash could provoke an angry backlash from middle-class investors.

But that doesn't mean China is immune from potential shocks. As its markets open ever wider to foreign trade and investment, the economy grows increasingly vulnerable to global trends, such as a downturn in exports due to slower growth elsewhere.

"In the case of China you can make a very plausible case that we have all the conditions for a serious crisis when there's an adverse shock," Pettis says. "There's a lot more debt out there than we think." *AP*

Imelda extols beauty, love, Marcos before businessmen

From page A1

Thursday, charming them with her patented patter on beauty and love and relating this somehow to the growth of the Philippine economy.

Wearing her usual terno, the widow of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos harked back to the years when she and her husband ruled the roost before they were driven into exile and disgrace, seizing on every positive sign of progress in the country as being somehow their vindication.

"Today, as things are beginning to stand upright in our country again, I find some vindication in what I see sprouting and flowering all over our economy," she told members of the Philippine Business Leaders Forum during their annual dinner at Makati's Dusit Hotel.

That the government is focusing on boosting tourism proved her point that beautifying the country to attract tourists and investors was important and was not meant to satisfy a love for extravagance, she said.

She said she was criticized for ordering the construction of the Folk Arts Theater and 18 new hotels in time for the holding of the International Monetary Fund-World Bank meetings in Manila in 1976. But she said this was necessary to help make a good impression and encourage foreigners to notice the Philippines.

With the country now regaining the confidence of foreign investors and the economy growing by record levels, she said she has proved her point.

The former first lady, whose large collection of shoes and jewelry came to symbolize the excess and corruption of the Marcos years, admitted she might have been a "little" extravagant, but claimed it was for a good cause.

"One thing I fervently believe in is the value of beauty. Beauty uplifts us, and if we strive for beauty in our collective lives, we will be uplifted as individuals, as communities and as a nation," said Imelda.

She said she was aware of the new word "imeldific," whose root is her first name, being used to mean "extravagance" and "excess."

She claimed it was during her husband's rule that medical institutions were established, like the Heart Center, the Kidney Center and the Lung Center.

"Now, medical tourism is a major program of the government. It was during our watch that we established primary, secondary and tertiary medical services," she said.

She said that the appreciation of the peso and the entry of more foreign investments were partly because of the implementation of government programs that were similar to those during the Marcos era.

"President Marcos set a direction and cleared a path that people are now returning to," she claimed.

Even President Macapagal-Arroyo's policy of improving ties with other countries to attract investments was somehow to the credit of the Marcoses. She claimed crucial diplomatic ties with China, Korea, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Middle East were developed during the Marcos dictatorship.

Asked how she manages to deal with all her problems, including the many legal battles still confronting her, Imelda said she just does not allow hate into her heart.

"I am in love all the time," she said.

She called on the business leaders to help in promoting harmony.

"The one lesson to be learned from the past is that if Filipinos would only unite rather than divide, we could accomplish much more," she said.

She said she was writing her autobiography to be titled "Mothering, Rising Spirit." But the book's publication is not yet certain, having been delayed by new events in her life, including her recent victory against the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

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Puerto Princesa celebrates
Pista Y Ang Kagueban
(Feast of the Forest)

Puerto Princesa's response to global warming. June 23, 2007, Bgy. Irawan, Puerto Princesa City.

Since its inception in 1991 as a reforestation program, Pista Y Ang Kagueban has gradually transformed into a tourist attraction. It is one of Puerto Princesa's many environmental programs, and a recipient of the UN's **Global 500 Roll of Honour Award.**

Now on its 17th year, it continues to attract people from all walks of life. It has succeeded not only in terms of trees planted (1,521,930 covering 217.9 hectares), but also in instilling the proper attitude among Puerto Princesans towards tree planting and conservation.

"Protect. Rehabilitate. Plan. This is Puerto Princesa City's environmental management concept. Protect what is there, rehabilitate what has been destroyed, and plan for the intelligent utilization of the city's terrestrial and marine resources. This is the life cycle that the city leadership envisions for the community to achieve sustainable development and help beat global warming."

Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn

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Half-cocked

EDITORIAL

FRESH FROM A SUCCESSFUL RUN FOR REELECtion, Sen. Panfilo Lacson appears to be on a warpath. Soon after his proclamation as one of the winners in this year's senatorial contest, Lacson engaged his fellow reelectionist senator, Joker Arroyo, in an ugly mudslinging contest. Lacson accused Arroyo, currently chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee, of sitting on the investigation of the Jose Pidal case allegedly involving the laundering by First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo of hundreds of millions of pesos in campaign funds—an investigation which he had initiated. Arroyo retorted that Lacson himself had botched up the probe by failing to convince the courts to open the Pidal account. Both of them seem to have forgotten that unlike in an electoral contest, public perceptions of who would make a better anti-graft investigator matter little when the chairmanship of the blue ribbon committee, which they both covet, is put to a vote. At the end of the day, the prized chairmanship will go to the choice of the majority, which happens to be the opposition.

Curiouser is Lacson's recent warnings against the Anti-Money Laundering Council. When the media reported that the AMLC had recently frozen P1.21 billion on suspicion that the money came from illegal sources, Lacson promptly accused the agency of violating the Anti-Money Laundering Act. Citing a provision of the law which says that "no assets shall be frozen, attached or forfeited, to the prejudice of a candidate for an electoral office during an election period," Lacson reminded the agency that it was put there by Congress as "a safeguard against (the AMLC) being used as a tool for political persecution." He went on to say that it was "quite understandable for transactions to exceed the P500,000 threshold during an election period" and "advised" the AMLC "to correct this mistake."

The law, of which Lacson was one of the principal sponsors, defines as "suspicious" all transactions involving one account that add up to P500,000 or more per day. The law also requires banks and other financial institutions to report these transactions to the AMLC. An average of 400 such transactions were reported from January to May this year, compared to 381 for the whole of last year, according to the AMLC. Seven cases, involving P1.4 billion, are under investigation, plus a few more involving $2.45 million.

So far, Lacson has not identified anyone, whether a politician or a non-politician, whose account had been frozen. So how can the public know if indeed any candidate for public office had been prejudiced by the freeze ordered by the AMLC? How did he arrive at the conclusion that the AMLC made a mistake in freezing those accounts? And why is he making not-so-subtle hints that the council is being used to persecute the Arroyo administration's foes? Innuendoes don't amount to proof, and if Lacson wants to destroy the council he once helped create, he should have a better reason than mere suspicion about its supposed subservience to Malacañang.

Without offering solid proof, Lacson seems to be going off half-cocked. Which is exactly what his Senate rival, Arroyo, has been saying about his Pidal exposé. And that is hardly the best recommendation for him to head the blue ribbon committee, whose principal function is to investigate graft and corruption in government.

His exertions would be better appreciated if he were to put them into amending the law, particularly the provision barring the AMLC from acting during the election period. For if there is any time money from drugs, illegal gambling and other illegitimate sources is most likely to flow, it is precisely during elections. Of course, that will open up the possibility of powerful politicians using the AMLC to serve their own selfish ends. But it's a risk worth taking compared to letting illegal gamblers and drug traffickers play puppeteers to powerful politicians whose campaign they help finance.

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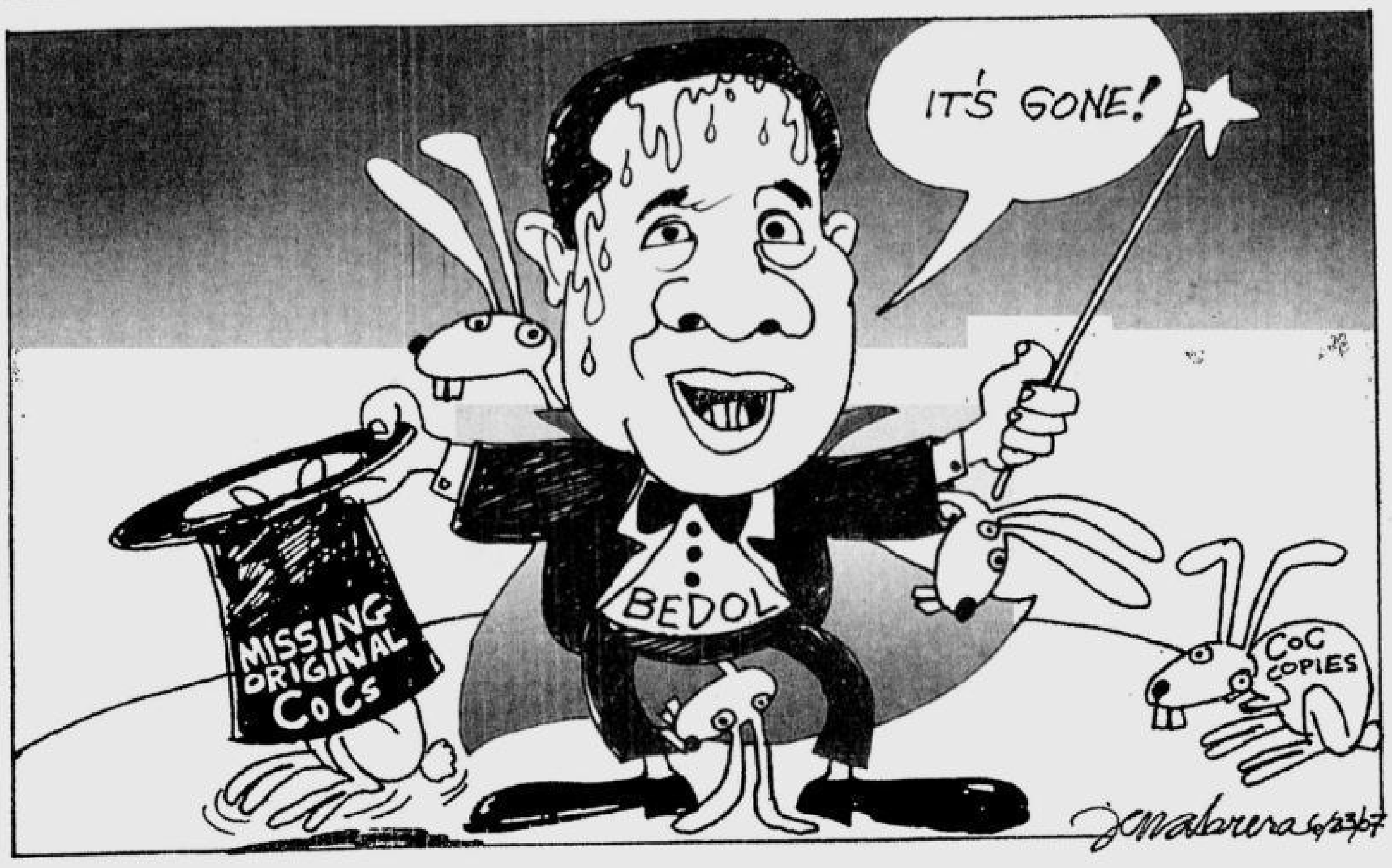


The supremacy of civilian authority

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

NOW THAT NAVY LT. ANTONIO F. TRILLANES IV has been proclaimed as one of the winners in the recent senatorial elections, the chief of staff and the other generals of the Armed Forces of the Philippines will have to salute their humble military subordinate as Sen. Antonio Trillanes beginning June 30. This reversal of roles will be in keeping with the constitutional provision under Art. II, Sec. 3 that "civilian authority is, at all times, supreme over the military."

This salutary rule is prescribed in all republican regimes where sovereignty is supposed to reside in the people, who exercise it through their elected and appointive representatives. It is rejected in autocratic countries where the people are governed not by their sovereign will but through the barrel of the gun.

History is replete with the gory records of military brutality prevailing over civilian authority in many lands. The king was the bygone ruler who established his primacy by force of arms over his less valorous subjects. His simple code was to kill all his enemies to protect his crown. And he had his soldiers behind him to defend his right by military might.

Power was won in the ancient hills with the bludgeon and the sword and the skill to kill. Genghis Khan and others like him won this right by being mass murderers. Through the ages and up to the present time, the annals of mankind are drenched with the blood of casualties, combatants as well as innocent victims, in the endless struggle for the right to rule.

The victors were mostly tyrants. Caligula of Rome, Attila the Hun, Ivan the Terrible of Russia, Phedon of Argos in Athens, Ludwig I and II of Bavaria, and in the modern world, Francisco Franco of Spain, Mao Zedong of China, Idi Amin of Uganda, Augusto Pinochet of Chile, Pol Pot of Cambodia, Saddam Hussein of Iraq, are among many other villains who have demonized the world.

Some have, despite their sanguinary past, won tribute rather than scorn and ignominy. Napoleon Bonaparte set Europe on fire but is now remembered not for his sins but his military victories. Simon Bolivar, who liberated many South American countries at much cost of blameless lives, is now honored as an audacious nationalist. Fidel Castro, who freed Cuba from the oppression of Fulgencio Batista, is now its glorified oppressor.

In fairness, let it be noted that there are a number of military leaders who were not tyrants but are revered as heroes of their race. Among them are George Washington, who is first in peace and war in the hearts of his people, Ulysses S. Grant, who led the Union Army to victory during the US Civil War, and Dwight Eisenhower, who also became President of the United States. Gen. Douglas MacArthur who was overwhelmed with the wildest reception in New York for his victories in the Pacific War was nevertheless denied the same post by his Republican Party.

In our country, Emilio Aguinaldo, who commanded the Filipino soldiers against the Spaniards and later the US invaders, was elected president of the first Philippine Republic, which died a-borning. During the American regime and up to the presidency of Diosdado Macapagal, the Armed Forces were kept in place and were not allowed to interfere in civilian affairs. That arrangement was abruptly changed when Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law in 1972 and needed the military to maintain it.

To this end, he pampered the military and gave it important positions in his dictatorship. The AFP became no longer of the Philippines but of the President. The generals became privileged viceroys and ordinary sergeants and corporals began to swagger like colonels. The uniformed upstarts redeemed themselves, however, by joining the people power revolution in 1986.

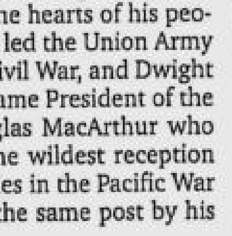
But their coddling by Marcos gave the Armed Forces an unwarranted influence they still enjoy in the administration of non-military matters. President Corazon Aquino cordially thanked them for their role in Edsa 1; President Fidel Ramos naturally preferred them as his comrades-in-arms over their civilian rivals; President Joseph Estrada acknowledged their help in installing him in Malacañang; and President Macapagal-Arroyo is afraid of them and is avoiding their displeasure at all costs.

Many Filipinos must have cast only a conscience vote for Trillanes to symbolize their support for the cause he espoused during the Oakwood mutiny he led in 2003. They probably did not expect him to be elected senator, but he was. Now they see him as the brave knight on his white charger raring to expose and combat the abuses of the Armed Forces that their commander in chief is unwilling to correct.

Senators Rodolfo Biazon, Gregorio Honasan and Panfilo Lacson have not shown much eagerness to investigate their "mistahs" who have been accused of many misdeeds and shortcomings unbecoming an officer and a gentleman. Let us hope that with the youthful enthusiasm of their new colleague to lead the way, they will together look more closely, representing the supreme civilian authority of the government, into the tattered record of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

How PHAP turned a health issue into a trade issue

GET REAL



Solita Collas-Monsod

TRADE SECRETARY PETER FAVILA TELLS ME that he does not recall—and neither does his office have a copy of—a private letter that, according to Representatives Etta Rosales and Risa Baraquel, he wrote to Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera regarding the Milk Code issue. I accept his statement. But information I obtained subsequent to our conversation is that he had a private talk or talks with Devanadera (I am given to understand that she wasn't falling for his line) regarding the issue. I leave it up to Secretary Favila whether he wants to deny that, too.

What Favila's office provided me were copies of (1) a letter he wrote to Health Secretary Francisco Duque referring to the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines' "concern over the negative effects" of two provisions of the Revised Implementing Rules and Regulations (RIRR) and asking Duque to "revisit or review" them—it is noteworthy that the letter was dated May 18, 2006, three days **after** the health secretary signed the administrative order that contained the RIRR; and (2) the official position of the Department of Trade and Industry on the proposed RIRR submitted to the House Committee on Trade and Industry. I am still waiting for Favila's response to US Chamber of Commerce president Thomas Donohue's letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo, in effect lobbying against the RIRR. I want to compare Favila's response to that of Duque's, who essentially told Donohue that he was totally off-base.

But how did the House, and particularly the Committee on Trade and Industry, get involved in a health issue? I am informed that this was a result of the efforts of infant milk-producing pharmaceuticals to convert the issue into a trade issue, since they weren't making any inroads into the health secretary's position, despite the intervention of the US Embassy, through its commercial attaché, and a US government functionary concerned with Southeast Asian trade. Presumably the House committee wanted a copy of the RIRR in "aid of legislation," and wanted to hear what the DTI and others had to say about it. But in light of the recent massacre of the cheap medicine bill in the same House (to the benefit of foreign pharmaceuticals and to the gross disadvantage of Filipinos who buy exorbitantly priced medicines), one is not sure anymore what the two hearings it conducted were in aid of.

One thing was certain: there was a sea change in the attitude of some congressmen between the first (unsympathetic to the pharmaceuticals) and the second (reduced animosity, bordering on sympathy) committee hearing. I leave it to the reader to guess why. There is also another interesting sidelight, which would be amusing if the implications were not so disgusting: after Duque signed the RIRR, three separate house bills on Milk Code amendments were introduced within the space of a month, and, surprise: all three hew pretty closely to the pharmaceutical industry's line!

But, in any case, it is clear to me that the DTI's official position on the RIRR exhibits both gross ignorance of the issues and an indefensible partiality toward the pharmaceuticals.

That may sound like harsh judgment, but anyone who reads (with an open mind, that is) the two documents that Favila's office sent me is bound to come to the same conclusion.

How's this for ignorance: Per the DTI official position, "While we agree that 'breast-feeding is good for babies up to two years,' we also recognize that the practice of breast-feeding is slowly becoming uncommon, as supported by a report of the World Health Organization showing Filipinos spending P21.5 billion yearly on infant formula."

Hello! That "slowly becoming uncommon" phenomenon is precisely why the DOH and every right-thinking Filipino, are getting concerned—because it is accompanied by unnecessary infant and children deaths and morbidity. The DTI seems to think it is a phenomenon that must be taken as a given. And it seems to be blissfully unaware (ignorant?) that the pharmaceuticals' official position is that "there is even a decline in the use of breast milk substitutes in the domestic market," what with a low "penetration rate" of 9 percent (changed to 7 percent more recently)—a figure which is the result of combining two very unrealistic assumptions—one which increases the denominator of the ratio, and the other which decreases the numerator.

Moreover, Favila's letter to Duque cites the two provisions of the RIRR which the pharmaceuticals object to—but it cites truncated, incomplete provisions which make them appear unreasonable. The complete provisions are eminently reasonable.

The partiality of the DTI toward the pharmaceuticals is obvious from the following: First, the only provisions of the RIRR it takes exception to are the very same provisions that the pharmaceuticals also take exception to. Second, again per its position paper, "The DTI, meanwhile, charged with the mandate to protect the rights and welfare of the consumers, has to balance the mandate of the law with a friendly environment conducive to the growth of business." And yet in doing so, it has weighed 16,000 lives and an even greater number of infant and child ailments against the profits (derived from misleading ads and promotions) of four pharmaceuticals—and clearly finds the latter more deserving of concern.

Hey, the DOH isn't creating an environment that stops those four pharmaceutical firms from growing. They can grow—as long as they don't do it at the expense of the growth and health of Filipino children. *Capisce*?

New twist in Zubiri-Pimentel contest

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

GENUINE OPPOSITION SENATORIAL CANDIdate Aquilino Pimentel III has gone to the Supreme Court to stop the canvassing of votes from Maguindanao. This move opens a new legal question and provides yet another twist to this cliffhanger of an electoral fight. But at this point it's evident that Pimentel wants to stop the canvassing because the investigation of Maguindanao ballots—recently undertaken by Task Force Maguindanao headed by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos and Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer—showed Team Unity candidate Juan Miguel Zubiri leading Pimentel (unofficially) by over 16,000 votes.

* * *

There are several things that can happen hereafter. The Supreme Court might say this is purely a Comelec matter; or it might intervene directly by ordering special elections in Maguindanao. However, the direct intervention is unlikely as it has to be based on reports from the Comelec; so the latter might as well be left alone. Should the Court leave the issue to the Comelec, the poll body presumably would proceed with the canvassing of votes and proclaim the winner; the losing candidate then would have no option but to file a regular electoral protest before the Senate Electoral Tribunal, instead of a pre-proclamation protest before the National Board of Canvassers. According to the rules recently set by the Senate and the House electoral tribunals, electoral protests should be resolved in six months at most; in past elections, the real winners only managed to occupy their posts just before the chamber's adjournment.

GO asserts that the Maguindanao COCs are manufactured; therefore, they should be disregarded. But the TU lawyers vehemently deny this. They say that, as the Comelec has stressed, the COCs are authentic as their serial numbers and the signatures of the board of canvassers appear genuine, too. Expect the word war to escalate with the Comelec's order to proceed with the canvassing.

* * *

The Comelec's other move could be to order special elections for the senatorial contest alone if only to deodorize the Maguindanao elections. It wouldn't make sense to include the municipal contests in the special elections, for in 21 out of 22 municipalities there, all the administration candidates—from mayor down to the last councilor—won overwhelmingly—without any opposition. There have been precedents where the high court ruled that candidates without opponents are presumed to have won. Seemingly ruled out is the possibility that the Comelec will set aside the province's votes, for as Zubiri argued, punishing the people there will be undemocratic and unconstitutional.

Task Force Maguindanao is expected to submit its report to the Comelec en banc possibly by Tuesday next week, after which it will decide the fate of the province's votes. But that could be affected by the Supreme Court's ruling. Either way, however, Zubiri has the edge. If a new senatorial election takes place, the formidable administration machinery in the province and the local officials are expected to campaign for just one name on the ballot: Zubiri. Besides, Maguindanaoans are sore at Pimentel as he has consistently called for their disenfranchisement and blocked the canvassing of their votes.

* * *

Last Thursday, I dwelt on several reforms, which Commissioner Rene Sarmiento proposed over our dzRH radio program, to make the Comelec more efficient and the elections more credible. They include de-synchronizing the elections by separating the presidential and senatorial elections from the local elections, thus enabling the Comelec to use scarce resources more effectively; removing the adjudication function from the Comelec and limiting its work to managing the periodic elections; enforcing the Poll Automation Law, RA 9369, for the 2010 national elections; greater transparency in the appointment of Comelec members; and incorporating election education in the school curriculum and making it a requirement in the filing of candidacies for public office.

Sarmiento also proposed to hold the elections in the ARMM two weeks earlier than the nationwide elections. He argued that this arrangement would enable the Comelec to focus its resources, especially the peace-keeping forces, on the ARMM, thus helping preserve the elections' credibility there. Sarmiento noted that in the recent elections, "advance election" worked well for local absentee voters such as the military and PNP personnel involved in election work, so there's no reason why advance voting can't be done in the ARMM.

* * *

Sarmiento also called for an interfaith dialogue between Christian and Muslim spiritual leaders, especially in provinces where election results have always been disputed. These leaders, he said, could help think out ways to strengthen the credibility of the electoral process in the Muslim-dominated areas.

These two additional suggestions, like his previous ones, are excellent and deserve serious consideration. I think that holding the elections in the ARMM ahead of the nationwide elections is particularly sensible, as this will help break the bad habit (of some leaders in the Muslim south) of manipulating elections for profit.

* * *

Several Masses have been scheduled for next Tuesday, June 26, to mark the 32nd death anniversary of St. Josemaria Escriva, the beloved founder of Opus Dei, as follows: Manila Cathedral 6 p.m. with Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales as lead celebrant; Mt. Carmel Church in New Manila, QC, 7 a.m.; Holy Rosary Parish in Angeles City, 5:30 p.m., to be concelebrated by Pampanga Archbishop Paciano Aniceto, Auxiliary Bishop Roberto Mallari and Msgr. Francisco Lansang; and San Sebastian Cathedral, Tarlac City, 5:15 p.m. All these commemorative Masses are open to the public.

Breast milk 'containers' never rust

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE THING YOU CAN SAY ABOUT BREAST MILK—its containers will never "rust." This brings to mind that old—and corny—joke about the advantages of breast milk, including the fact that "it comes in the most attractive containers."

Since I think the eroticization of the female breast and even of breast-feeding is one factor contributing to the ambivalent feelings some women have about suckling their young, I won't go there. But I'm very sure that breast-feeding mothers won't ever have to worry about their milk becoming contaminated, unlike mothers currently bottle-feeding and depending on Bonna, Promil Kid, Promil and Progress Gold for their children's nutrition. As you are aware, the Bureau of Food and Drugs ordered earlier this week the recall of millions of cans of the above-mentioned milk brands, which had been found to be infested with molds and rusting outer rims.

The milk brands are products of Wyeth, a multinational giant that has joined with other powdered milk manufacturers in the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP) in contesting the Department of Health's authority to issue revised rules and regulations on the marketing of breast milk substitutes. Perhaps, Wyeth should publicize how they propose to improve on the packaging of breast milk, which, unlike Promil, Promil Kid etc., doesn't have to be placed in metal cans and stored in weather-proof warehouses, mixed with clean boiled water and poured into feeding bottles that have been previously washed and sterilized.

To be sure, Wyeth has engaged in an extensive damage-control media campaign, issuing clarifications that they had conducted tests on the milk in the affected cans and found that "the integrity of the milk powder was maintained." Rightly, the BFAD has said it remains "unconvinced" about Wyeth's claims. After all, the Wyeth labs are hardly a disinterested party in the recall.

* * *

BUT this hue and cry over the allegedly damaged milk cans certainly points to the vulnerability of milk powder which, like other consumer products, is subject to spoilage, improper storage and contamination. Perhaps we should add these to the many reasons cited by experts who say that powdered milk is clearly inferior to breast milk.

This would obviously be news to the millions of Filipino mothers who have chosen to bottle-feed their children. And the irony is, as the documentary "Formula for Disaster" shows, mothers are choosing bottle over breast mainly because they believe that powdered milk is the superior product, that it would make their babies not just healthier but also brighter. This is all foolishness, of course, but if the only information you get about infant nutrition is from radio, TV and print ads, as well as doctors, nurses and midwives pushing their own brands at you, you will come away thinking bottle-fed babies are fatter (which is, on the average, true but it is "bad" fat), healthier, stronger, more intelligent.

* * *

I RECENTLY got into a heated (but friendly) discussion with two health professionals, a midwife and an obstetrician-gynecologist, about the merits and demerits of breast-feeding. It isn't just misinformation or disinformation that explains many mothers' preference for bottle-feeding, argued the midwife. It's also the demands made on a mother's time and convenience (and privacy) by breast-feeding.

"I don't think many mothers would bring their infants with them when they commute to work," commented the doctor. "Imagine exposing a baby to all that pollution!"

"When a mother returns to work," said the midwife, "she usually has a hard time continuing to breast-feed. Just imagine," she added, "a working mother having to ride the bus or stand in a jam-packed LRT car while lugging her breast pump and bottles, not to mention a cooler in which she will store the expressed milk."

In many work places, she added, breast-feeding mothers don't even have a private space where they could breast-feed without interruption. And where could she store the expressed milk? Rare is the employer who would provide a refrigerator exclusively for storing expressed breast milk.

* * *

FROM PERSONAL experience, while it is difficult to continue breast-feeding even after your maternity leave, it's possible. All you need to do is to express milk after each feeding and store the milk in your freezer (properly labeled with the date of expressing). Thawed (but not heated) frozen breast milk allows your husband or yaya to continue "breast-feeding" your baby even when you're away. But to keep up your milk supply, you need to express while at work.

I know, too, about the inconveniences presented by breast-feeding or even expressing milk. "Imagine the mother tilling the field or selling fish in the market having to stop and express her milk," argued the midwife.

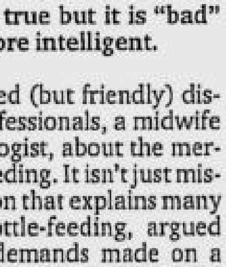
But then, I argued back, aren't these precisely the mothers who can ill-afford to buy powdered milk for their babies and to meet all the demands of proper, sanitary bottle-feeding?

I think this is a "false dilemma." It's a dilemma only because we think breast-feeding is solely the mother's (and baby's) concern. But if the survival of infants is a social concern, then society will have to step up and do its part. Husbands will have to help with the housework so their wives could breast-feed as needed. Employers will have to provide breast-feeding rooms, breast pumps and refrigerators for hassle-free milk expression. Legislators can consider a longer maternity leave and penalizing employers who discriminate against women because of it. And the public should support mothers who choose to breast-feed, even if by force of circumstance they do this in public. The least you could do is not to stare or snicker.

Colombia's eternal agony

WORLD VIEW

Jorge Casteñeda



COLOMBIA IS IN BETTER SHAPE TODAY THAN it has been for years, thanks largely to President Alvaro Uribe's leadership. But it remains a bizarre place, one facing strange and intractable challenges. Colombia's FARC guerrillas have held some of their kidnapping victims for many years. Child soldiers still linger in paramilitary groups, and there are compromising video recordings of leading Colombian politicians and drug lords. Perhaps weirdest of all, there are imprisoned guerrillas who refuse to be set free, and a government that insists on liberating them, even against their will.

Uribe was re-elected just over a year ago by a landslide, a tribute to the popularity and effectiveness of his "democratic security" policy of combating both the guerrillas and the country's generalized violence. Latin America's oldest standing two-party system was decimated in that election, as the Polo Democrático presidential candidate won more votes than the Liberal Party's contender, finally giving electoral expression to Left-wing forces that had never been able to see more potential for change at the ballot box than by fighting in the mountains.

Negotiations on Colombia's Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States had been finalized. Even the questionable deal Uribe cut with the Right-wing paramilitary AUC groups, pardoning up to 30,000 of their members for often horrendous crimes in exchange for their disarmament, appeared successful. With Uribe in charge, Colombia seemed to be on a roll.

But much of this success has since been squandered, with both Colombia and Uribe now in deep trouble. The so-called "parapolítica" scandals have rocked Uribe's government, forcing the resignation of some Cabinet ministers, and embarrassing others, including the President himself. Photographs, videos and audio recordings of politicians and paramilitary thugs (including one who boasts of having personally killed more than 300 of his enemies) have discredited a political elite that, while never very popular, has now had some of the worst suspicions that many held about it graphically confirmed.

For years human rights activists and scholars suspected the obvious: the emergence of an enormous, vicious, well-armed and well-trained parallel army to fight the guerrillas was not some spontaneous act. It was, many believed, a deliberate policy devised and carried out by the official military and the political elite to wage war "off the books." The "parapolítica" or "paragate" revelations seem to confirm another suspicion as well: the distinction between the paramilitaries and the drug cartels, like that between the guerrillas and the cartels, is a nuanced one.

Unfortunately, these revelations come at the worst possible moment. Colombia's FTA with the United States was in danger the moment the US Republicans lost their majority in both houses of Congress last November. Still, it seemed more likely to pass than the other two pending Latin American trade deals with Panama and Peru. Now it appears that President George W. Bush's closest ally in the hemisphere will not only have its FTA rejected, owing to human rights concerns in the US House and Senate. Moreover, it might also lose Plan Colombia, the huge—and hugely controversial—American aid program that has funneled tens of billions of dollars into Colombia since the late 1990s, ostensibly to fight the drug cartels, but also, in fact, to wage counter-insurgency.

Uribe has spent weeks directly and personally lobbying key American legislators, and he is undoubtedly his own best advocate. But, just as former US Vice President Al Gore recently refused to share a dais with Uribe in Miami, many members of Congress refuse to approve a trade agreement or an aid package that may link them to a government tainted by egregious human rights abuses, complicity with drug lords, or both.

The United States has never really wanted to include human rights issues in trade agreements; at best, and only when forced, US presidents have consented to incorporating labor and environmental chapters. The European Union thinks differently; in its economic cooperation and free trade agreement with Mexico, for example, it insisted on—and achieved—the inclusion of a "democracy clause" that made its economic benefits conditional on ongoing respect for democratic rule and human rights.

Colombia's blemished human rights record is affecting its government's international standing and providing ammunition for those who wish to sabotage the FTA. For example, protectionist Democrats in the US Congress have been able to insulate themselves from charges of opposing free trade if they scuttle Colombia's FTA, because they will most likely ratify the deals for Panama and Peru.

Can Uribe survive his current travails? The answer is almost certainly yes, unless the parapolítica mess reaches him directly, or the US explicitly rejects the FTA and postpones or attaches conditions to renewal of funding for Plan Colombia.

Uribe's political demise would hurt everyone, but the rejection of the FTA on human rights grounds could set a healthy precedent. In a region where threats to democracy and human rights are growing, linking trade and economic policy to these considerations is not a bad idea. Uribe may not deserve such a fate, but history works in strange ways. *Project Syndicate*

Jorge G. Castañeda, former foreign minister of Mexico (2000-2003), is a Global Distinguished Professor of Politics and Latin American Studies at New York University.

Never mind in June

YOUNG BLOOD

January Guia V. Caringal

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

"IT'S BEEN AN HOUR SINCE HE LEFT. THE TAKE-OUT order is ready. Where is he? Is he ever coming back? What is taking him so long? Quit thinking Guia, he'll be back in no time..."

As the wait for Russel to arrive grew longer, I became anxious with the thought that I was alone. I couldn't stay any longer; so I finally decided to leave. I walked around the mall, my eyes alerted to catch a glimpse of him. But I did not see even just his shadow. I brought out my cell phone to text him and ask his whereabouts when I suddenly realized he had left his cell with me. Damn, just another bad day. Angrily, I went home.

As I reached home, I laid his cell on his bed, went upstairs, lay down and started to cry. How could he do this to me? How in the world could he just leave me like that without any word? How could he? I was so pissed off. My phone suddenly beeped, it was him.

"I'm on the bus already. Go down to the bookshelf, I left something for you." He really knows how to make me crazy, I thought. I tried to call him but he wouldn't reply. I got up, went to the cabinet, opened it and saw a note and a box. The note read:

Guia,
1. Open phone.
2. Smile.
3. Go to my room.
4. Look under the pillow.
I'm sorry, sometimes you need to do things my way.
Russel

I followed the instructions willingly. As I opened the box, it was the cell phone I told him about earlier, the one I wanted to buy when I'd get my salary. I opened it and read the welcome greeting.... "Will you marry me?" I smiled. My heart melted and I wanted to cry, but there were still some steps to follow. So I went to his room, looked under the pillow and saw the engagement ring. Tears started to run down my cheeks. I was calling him but still he rejected my call.

"Are you done?" his next text message read.

"Yes. Please come back, we need to talk. I'm crying already," I replied.

"Go to the veranda first, there's still something for you there."

I went out and as I opened the door, there he was, the man of my dreams, standing in front me. I couldn't help it, I cried some more. We went to the room, he slipped the ring into my finger and hugged me.

That was how he proposed to me...

I met Russel way back in 2005 when I took the Philippine Military Academy entrance exam. I could still remember that he was the *masungit* and *suplado* type of guy. Kind of irritated that a girl like me would enter the academy he was in. He passed by my side and told me to review my answers. That was our very first conversation. Nice, wasn't it?

After that, every time I went to the PMA to visit my cousin, who was then a first year student there, I got to see him more and more. And whenever we bumped into each other, we would have short conversations—like "hi," and "hello"—and I would smile at him and he would smile back at me.

In March 2006, he graduated, cum laude. When I got word about it, I texted him and congratulated him. After a while, we became "textmates" and even phone pals. One day, he invited me to go out with him and, without hesitation, I agreed. More dates followed, and became more often. And a special relationship began. Things went smoothly. By April, I had already introduced him to my parents and relatives, and they did not disapprove of the fact that we were already dating. He always picked me up every time we went out on a date. He would bring me home and would apologize to my mom when we returned late. I got to meet his parents and relatives, too.

But we had to go our separate ways the following May because he had to go to Mindanao for his first assignment as an army officer.

I never thought that our relationship would turn "serious." After all, he was an AFP officer and this meant that he would be assigned everywhere. This also meant ours was bound to be a long-distance relationship. I even thought that what we had was just a "summer fling"—one more for our memories. But as the months passed, we continued communicating with each other. We would often text and call each other whenever we got the chance. We saw to it that distance would not be a hindrance to our relationship. Slowly, we became closer and closer and became the best of friends.

Because of the nature of his work, it is not possible to see him always or whenever I want to. I can count the few times we have been together. I have to admit that away from him, I would feel lonely and sad. Mom gives me comfort whenever I miss him. (By the way, my mom is an expert of this kind of situation. My dad is in the army, too.) There are times when I would not be able to communicate with him for weeks and months. And I'm left thinking and wondering how he is and if he's safe. In order that I would not feel lonely, I would go out and hang out with friends, just to kill the time.

Time flies very fast, and before I know it, he's back home, again.

Every time he comes home, he sees to it that he spends most of his time with me, and so do I. We would just enjoy each other's company. We would talk a lot about nothing in particular—life, friends, family, future plans, anything under the sun. In one such occasion, he told me that he wanted to spend the rest of his life with me. I told him I felt the same way. We made plans, and I thought marriage would come in a year's time...

Still I was very surprised when he finally asked me to marry him. Much more, when I found out that he had asked permission from my mom first.

The initial preparatory stage wasn't easy at all. The first problem was how to tell my dad, but my mom was there to help us. After some arguments, my dad finally gave his consent, just as long as the marriage would be held next year. Next was the problem of funds. We had to save our salaries to prepare for it. Motif, wedding gown, principal sponsors, secondary sponsors, ring bearer, flower girls, guest list, reception venue and church venue were just few of the things we had to keep in mind.

Whoever said that long-distance relationships don't work at all? Well, I have to admit that I once held this assumption to be true. But I now believe that no matter the distance, no matter how hard things may be, if you love the person, nothing can go wrong.

I can now say that young as I am, I've met the man I want to spend the rest of my life with. Loving him has changed my life. It has brought out the best in me. And with the blessings of our families, I know we can make the best out of everything the world has to offer us.

Back when I was a kid, I always thought that I would be getting married in the month of June. I'll be one of the famous "June Brides," I would dream then. But now, I would rather get married any month of the year, as long it's with the right person—my fiancé, my best friend, Russel.

January Guia V. Caringal, 22, is a clerk at John Hay Management Corp.

Rename Plaza Miranda after Ramon Magsaysay Sr.

PLAZA MIRANDA IN QUIAPO, Manila is named after Jose Sandino y Miranda. Nothing much is known about Señor Miranda except that he served as secretary of the treasury of the Philippines for 10 years starting in 1853.

In this connection, I would like to strongly suggest that Plaza Miranda be renamed after the man who always invoked the immortal words, "Can we defend this in Plaza Miranda?" whenever there were major issues confronting the government. It would be a proper and fitting tribute to a President who was—and still is—well-loved by the Filipino people.

I sincerely hope this proposal will get the approval of the National Historical Institute and other government officials on or before Aug. 31, 2007 which incidentally is President Ramon Magsaysay Sr.'s 100th birth anniversary.

—PAUL R. MORTEL,
MBLA Court, Malanday,
Marikina City

Pag-Ibig regularly replaces Philippine flag at Atrium

WE WRITE TO RESPOND TO THE letter of Tomas Tuason, regarding the tattered Philippine flags displayed in the Atrium Building in Makati City. (INQUIRER, 6/6/07) The Pag-Ibig Fund's corporate headquarters is housed at the Atrium.

The Pag-Ibig Fund recognizes the significance of our nation's prime symbol—the Philippine flag. As a policy, we replace the Philippine colors on display once a month or every two months, depending on the condition of the flag on display. Replacement is made more frequent during the rainy season. We are pleased to tell the public that the Pag-Ibig Fund replaced the flags referred to two weeks before Tuason's letter was printed.

In its own way, the Pag-Ibig Fund also exhibits its own brand of "Pinoy" pride through its continually improving services for its members and through the prudent management of the members' funds. Our efforts have resulted in our achieving better Pag-Ibig's twin mandates of housing finance and provident savings for the Filipino workers.

—MARGE A. JORILLO,
vice president, Public Affairs
and Information Office,
Home Development Mutual Fund,
The Atrium of Makati,
Makati Avenue, Makati City

AFP survey on Senator-elect Trillanes no big deal

THIS LETTER IS ABOUT THE survey conducted by the Civil Relations Service (CRS) of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to determine the perception of military personnel regarding Antonio Trillanes IV's winning a Senate seat.

The story about the survey first appeared in Conrado de Quiros' column (INQUIRER, 6/11/07) and was later picked up by other local newspapers. I am a bit sick not of the conduct of the survey, but of some reactions which made a big deal out of it—which, I think, was pointless.

In the first place, the AFP has never denied that such a survey was conducted on June 6, 2007. It was openly conducted, as the CRSAFP said, to simply keep the AFP realistically in touch with and attentive to the collective and distinct voices of its personnel.

However, Genuine Opposition spokesman Adel Tamano overreacted, saying that the AFP might get back at those who truthfully answered the survey questions. Huh? What is this survey for, if it wasn't for the truth? Well, like any other objective surveys, the expression of the respondents' real sentiments is what it was all about.

AFP PIO chief, Lt. Col. Bartolome Bacarro, has clarified that the survey findings are going to be used by the AFP as a management tool, among others. The survey objectives were: to determine the military personnel's level of perception of the likelihood of Trillanes' victory in the senatorial race and to allow the military to properly address dissenting opinions should there be a need for it. Indeed, real and true sentiments were sought.

Tamano also said that the survey was unconstitutional because it violated the respondents' privacy. Where and why would there be a violation? For his information, the survey did not ask the respondents whom they voted for. Besides, the respondents gave views without revealing their identities. The choice of whether or not to fill out the demographical profile was left to the respondents.

I don't know, but I don't see anything wrong about the agenda behind the survey. Trillanes is a peculiar case as it is the first time that a subject of a court martial has succeeded in getting himself elected to public office. Isn't this a welcome development in the AFP organization?

The time is past for mere speculations and rough observations that are made without reliable statistical data.

We cannot fault the AFP leadership for trying to feel the sentiments of its men. The AFP believes that it is its primary responsibility to identify the issues that affect its soldiers. In doing so, it can rightly address emerging tricky situations or immediately solve problems. After all, happy soldiers are productive and efficient soldiers.

—LT. GENARDO
LORENZO, PA (Ret.),
paper_loud@yahoo.com

New requirement for GSIS members

I AGREE WITH MANUEL A. Magistrado of Virac, Catanduanes on his observations that "crowds of old, sickly, pale, blind, frail, coughing and disabled pensioners" were in the GSIS main office and were so eager to get the vaunted eCard Plus of Winston Garcia. (INQUIRER, 6/8/07)

I also saw limping, deaf, weak and "wheelchaired" pensioners in the GSIS Naga Branch Office numbering to several hundreds, if not thousands.

And the worst thing was when the GSIS personnel asked for the telephone and cell phone numbers, and the names of parents who had been long dead, and their birth dates—information details that old pensioners could hardly recall.

It's true that most, if not all of the pensioners, experienced hunger for five months when their monthly pensions were suspended for a reason they could hardly believe—enrollment in the eCard Plus. But that was not the end because Garcia came up with another requirement which would make the pensioners all the more suffer.

I happened to ride in a tricycle recently with a woman-pensioner who told me that she did not receive her pension from January to May 2007. She finally received her pension for five months only this June 2007. But, she continued, the GSIS will soon be requiring the pensioners to submit to another validation—this time through voice recordings, this on top of the required computerized validation through thumb prints.

This is another ordeal for pensioners who are now in the twilight of their lives and already gasping for breath due to illnesses and whose meager pension is not enough to pay for their maintenance medication.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA,
Barangay Camambugan,
Daet, Camarines Norte 4600

The 'bitter-sweet' realities of Philippine 'independence'

KALAYAAN! KALAYAAN! KALAyaan po!" shouts the man in katipunero outfit in a TV teaser for the commemoration of "Independence Day" while passersby and the city seem oblivious of his cries.

The teaser speaks of the bitter-sweet realities in the day-to-day life of ordinary Filipinos, especially these days, in the reign of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. For how can Filipinos celebrate independence when they don't have enough food, work opportunities, government funds for basic services, space to exercise civil liberties, despite the fact that the Philippines is so rich in natural and human resources?

While the country is vastly agricultural, 80 percent of our rice supply is imported. In many households, the cancerous pancit canton has become the family's staple food. The "power" of the meager income of the common *tao* is further rendered almost "inutile" by the non-stop increases in the prices of oil, basic commodities and medicines, as well as by the high cost of education. In the premier state university, the University of the Philippines, tuition and other fees have been raised by 300 percent.

While 2,000 Filipinos line up every day at the Department of Foreign Affairs to get their passports, 3,000 leave the country for greener pastures abroad, and Malacañang behaves like a pimp promising a thousand opportunities in New Zealand, Japan and Australia.

How can Filipinos believe there is independence when the "savior" of the country's economy relies mainly on OFW remittances, when we have to welcome such "balikbayan boxes" as those that may contain the remains of OFWs like Flor Contemplacion and Rey Cortez? When unarmed workers, farmers, human rights advocates and journalists of this beloved country are being killed or being abducted because of their firm commitment to national democracy?

How can Filipinos claim to be "independent" when the government-sponsored Human Security Act, a local version of the US Patriotic Act, is soon to be implemented in July, purportedly to "protect" Filipinos against terror? Welcome to the dark ages of undeclared martial law.

But there cannot be true independence when millions of Filipinos are starving, when their only hope to win the war against hunger and poverty is winning a million pesos in game shows, never mind if they have to die trying.

True independence includes genuine land reform, national industrialization, a culture of respect, the sovereign will prevailing and the national leadership upholding the people's democratic interests.

—JOAN LERIO,
secretary general,
Sining na Naglilingkod sa Bayan,
39 Scout Bayoran St.,
Barangay South Triangle,
Quezon City

'Notice' requirements met

A letter published yesterday, titled "Fil-Estate defends 'fired' employees" and signed by Leandro V. de Mesa, should have been accompanied by the following explanation:

Prior to publishing a "notice to the public," the INQUIRER*'s Classified Ads division requires the advertiser to submit certain requirements, among them a notarized sworn statement and an authorization to publish the ad. The sworn statement specifies that the advertiser shall hold the Philippine Daily Inquirer free from any liability that may arise from the publication of the notice. These requirements were fulfilled in the case in question.—Ed.*

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Comelec rules no poll failure in Biñan

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMELEC) has denied the petition of the son-in-law of Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. to declare a failure of elections in Biñan, Laguna.

In a three-page resolution, the Comelec en banc also ordered the municipal board of canvassers of Biñan to reconvene and canvass the remaining votes and proclaim the winning local candidates in the town.

Abalos inhibited himself from the en banc, with senior election commissioner Resurreccion Borra taking over as acting chairman.

"We are deeply convinced that there was no failure of elections in Biñan, Laguna," the en banc said in junking the petition of Jose Francisco Ruben "Cookie" Yatco, a candidate for Biñan mayor and son-in-law of Abalos.

Yatco questioned the conduct of the May 14 elections, saying that voting in most precincts was delayed due to fraudulent acts resulting in the disenfranchisement of majority of voters.

Nothing unusual

"While it may be true that there was a delay in the conduct of the elections on account of the alleged massive substitution of election inspectors, intimidation, and organized chaos, the Summary of Official Minutes of Counting and Voting shows nothing therein which would even hint that elections never pushed through," the en banc decision said.

"A mere instance of delay or extension of the hours of voting will not result in the failure of elections," it added.

The en banc also said that Yatco failed to identify the precincts where voting was not held.

"The commission cannot determine if the votes not cast are sufficient to affect the results of the elections," the en banc said.

The en banc noted that, according to the Supreme Court, there would be failure of elections if no voting was held in any precinct because of force majeure, violence or terrorism and if the votes not cast would affect the results of the elections. Only the occurrence of these two circumstances would justify the calling of a special elections.

Meritorious evidence

The commission found merit in the pieces of evidence submitted by the respondents, including mayoral candidate, Marlyn Alonte, who asserted that elections took place in Biñan.

Among these were the 515 election returns out of 517 precincts in Biñan and the statistical report of the Comelec that approximately 69 percent voted in the town that was supported by the report of the National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel).

The commission on May 17 ordered the suspension of the canvassing of the municipal board of canvassers after Yatco filed his petition to declare a failure of elections.

The en banc's resolution has effectively lifted the suspension order.

According to counting done by the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), Alonte leads with 29,781 votes against Yatco's 23,404 votes.

The delay in the canvassing of votes in Biñan also delayed the proclamation of candidates for governor and board members of the province of Laguna since the number of votes in Biñan was deemed big enough to alter the results of voting for board members.

The Comelec was earlier accused of bias in favor of Yatco, Abalos' son-in-law, an accusation that Abalos had denied.

Teachers in the town had protested the suspension of the canvass and allegations that there was massive fraud in the town during the elections.

The teachers admitted that some precincts opened late but they said that it was not a valid justification to stop the canvassing and order a failure of elections. They also blamed the election delay on the Comelec.

MEMBERS of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) help set up checkpoints in the boundary of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur as authorities try to keep track of the kidnappers of Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi.

RICHEL UMEL/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Tribal elders surrender gunman in vice gov's slay

By Desiree Caluza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—TRIBAL ELDERS have surrendered to the National Bureau of Investigation the principal suspect in the April 7 killing of Kalinga Vice Gov. Rommel Diasen, Kalinga officials said.

In a phone interview, outgoing Kalinga Rep. Laurence Wacnang said the suspect, identified as Joel Melod, 24, has been in the custody of the NBI since Tuesday.

Melod admitted to a Kalinga-based radio reporter in a videotaped interview that he shot and killed Diasen as the latter was delivering a speech in Barangay Magnao in Tabuk on April 7.

He told the reporter that he killed Diasen to avenge the death of his uncle, Judge Milnar Lammawin of the regional trial court in Kalinga, on Aug. 9, 2004.

In the interview, Melod said he attacked Diasen for his failure to fulfill his promise to help hasten the solution of Lammawin's case.

Lammawin's brother, Mayor Camilo Lammawin of Tabuk, Kalinga, said he asked Melod's parents last week to surrender their son to the police.

Melod's parents said their son was hiding at the house of one of their relatives in Baguio City.

Lammawin said it took him and the tribe members two hours to convince Melod to surrender.

"He said he wanted to surrender but he was afraid that he might be killed. I convinced him to surrender for the good of his tribe and told him that he must face the things he did to (Diasen) because he was also his uncle. We also told him that if he surrendered, we would bring justice to Rommel," Lammawin told the INQUIRER by telephone.

Lammawin and the elders of Magnao tribe surrendered Melod to the NBI-Cordillera here at 1 a.m. on Tuesday. Melod was taken to Manila on Wednesday.

Gov't brings in more troops in rescue of Italian priest

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE GOVERNMENT has added more muscle to the search for kidnapped Italian priest Giancarlo Bossi but was clueless over where he is being kept, forcing some officials to tap the help of local contacts for clues.

At least two brigades of Army soldiers are now engaged in the search and rescue operations for Bossi, according to Lt. Gen. Eugenio Cedo, Western Mindanao Command chief.

Cedo ordered the two Army Brigades to bring Bossi back to his religious community, the Pontifical Institute for Foreign Missions (PIME).

"Make sure no stones are unturned in the search. Scour the areas thoroughly," Maj. Eugene Batara, Westmincom spokesperson, quoted Cedo as saying in a directive.

Puzzle

But Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino said the military was puzzled at why negotiations being conducted by the MILF with the kidnappers were not moving.

Dolorfino said authorities are seeking the help of local contacts, like the Dimaporos, and "concerned Muslim brothers" in identifying where Bossi is being kept.

Negotiations were to be pursued, Dolorfino said, but only after proof of life was presented.

Maj. Batara said the 103rd Army Brigade in the Lanao provinces and 102nd Army Brigade in the Zamboanga Peninsula were ordered to make the rescue of Bossi their priority objective.

"No halt in the rescue, Bossi is the priority for recovery," Batara quoted Cedo's directive.

Batara said the operations are focused on areas in Lanao del Norte and the towns of Naga and Tungawan in Zamboanga Sibugay.

Cedo did not give any timeframe, but Batara said the directive stressed on the "words priority and as soon as possible."

Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, chief of National Capitol Region Command and directly coordinating with the rebel group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for Bossi's recovery confirmed the search has been expanded to different areas in Western and Central Mindanao.

Expanded search

Dolorfino said aside from the usual troopers from the Philippine National Police, the Army and the MILF, other intelligence units were tapped to operate, including the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI).

Task Force Bossi chief, Col. Jovencio Magalso, said operations in Zamboanga Sibugay continue, saying they were "sure that Bossi and his captors are just moving around the peninsula."

But Magalso said people were spreading false reports to confuse authorities and divert rescue efforts to other areas.

Dolorfino said the operations also reached as far as Basilan and Sulu.

Al Mojahid Biao, deputy commander for Military Affairs of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in Indanan, Sulu, also confirmed to the INQUIRER that they have alerted all their units and allied forces on the island.

"They might stray here. We want to help to get the priest," Biao said.

But Dolorfino said he believes Bossi and his captors are still in Lanao del Norte.

Sincerity

"The MILF would never mobilize and deploy that many forces on the ground if the information is not correct (that Bossi is there)," Dolorfino said.

"I am banking on their sincerity that Bossi is in the area of Lanao del Norte," he added.

Rudy Rodil, newly appointed chief government negotiator, said he issued instructions to the government's adhoc joint action group to coordinate with the MILF in the search for Bossi.

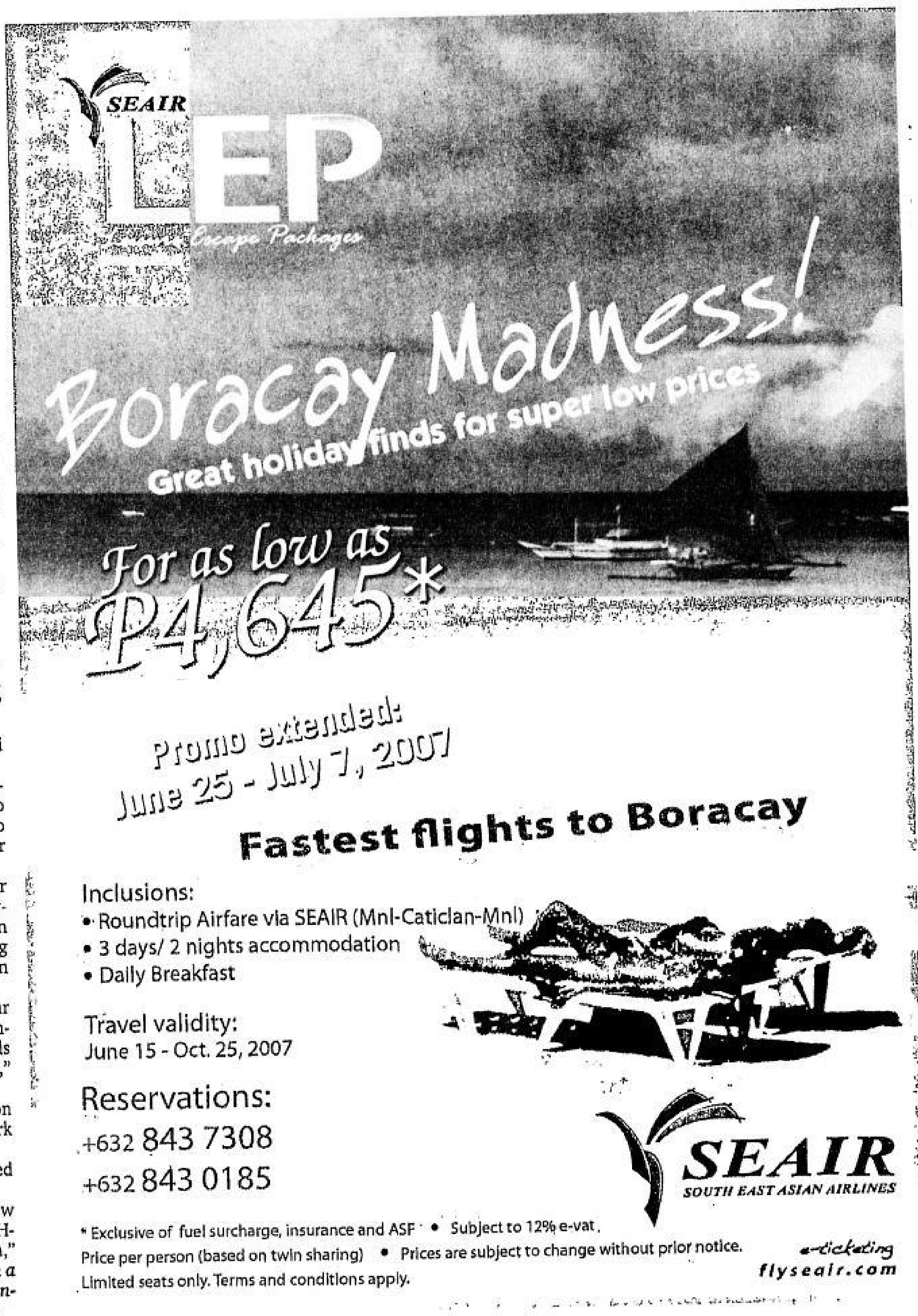
The AHJAG is the operating mechanism for a 2002 joint communiqué between the government and the MILF, which expired on Wednesday. The AHJAG has the duty of going after terror groups and lawless elements in Mindanao.

"The extension of the AHJAG is only as far as the Bossi's case is concerned. I issued instructions on that matter. Now both panels have to meet for the reactivation of AHJAG," Rodil said.

"I am now bridging the gap. Our operation to get Bossi will continue. We need to work for his release," he added.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu welcomed Rodil's appointment.

"He has long been in the peace panel. Now if they want to talk about the extension of AHJAG, we are willing to discuss it with them," Kabalu told the INQUIRER. *Julie Alipala with a report from Jeoffrey Maitem, Inquirer Mindanao and Christine Avendaño in Manila*



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Mad about mud

By Carla P. Gomez
Bacolod City

Festival features hot sulfur springs that are believed to be medicinal

LIKE ALIENS AND ZOMBIES from other worlds, bodies swathed in clay from steaming hot ponds will converge this weekend in Murcia town in Negros Occidental to showcase man's harmony with nature.

They will participate in the annual Mudpack Festival at Mambukal Resort in Murcia, 31 kilometers east of Bacolod City. The resort, about 1,200 feet above sea level and spread over 23.6 hectares of land, serves as a gateway to Kanlaon Volcano.

Today and tomorrow, Mambukal will celebrate its 11th Mudpack Festival with the theme "Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Our Body, Heart, Mind and Spirit."

People will cover their bodies with the resort's distinct multicolored clay to stir awareness of the importance of the environment, resort manager Ellen Vasquez says.

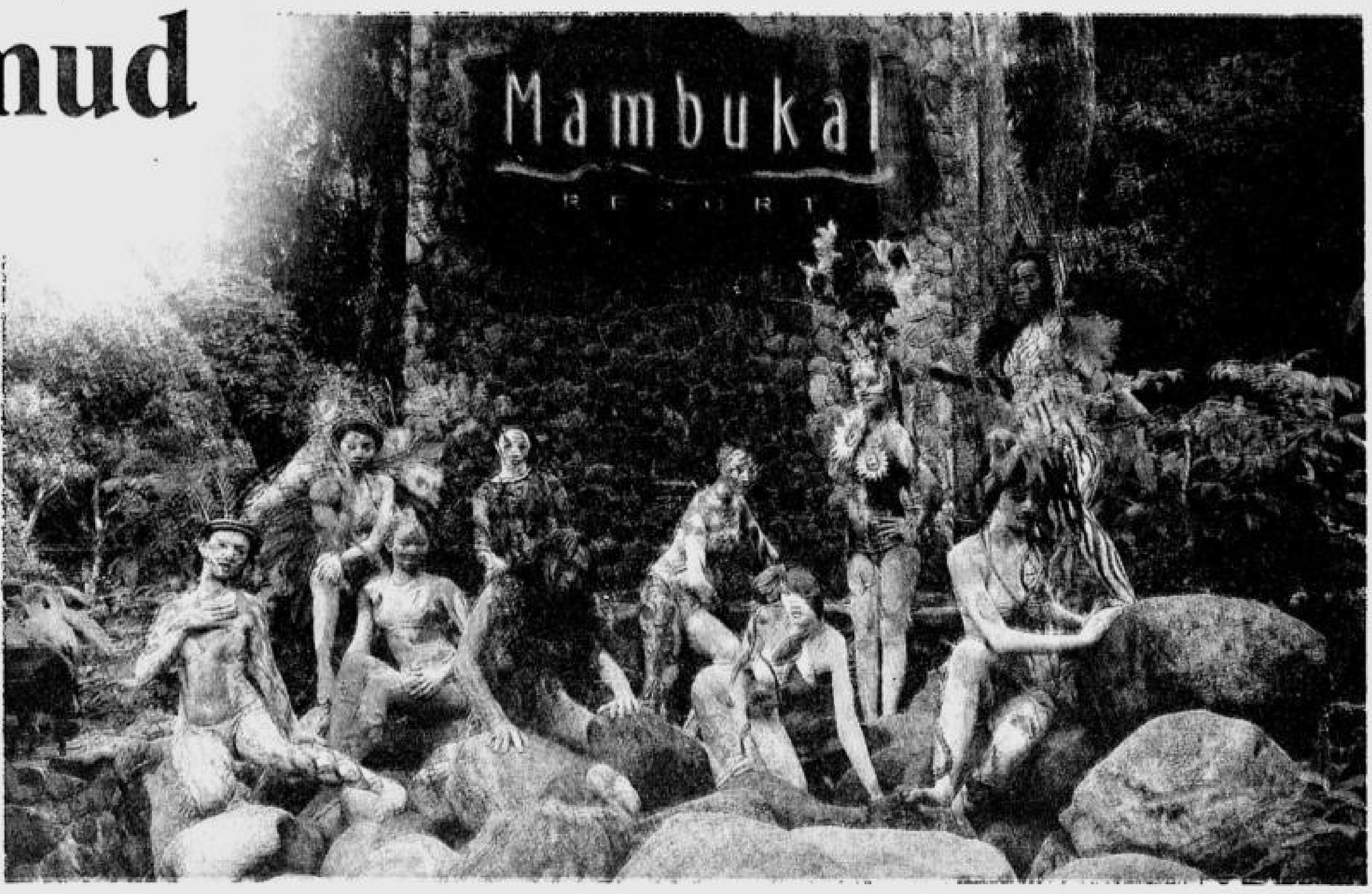
The festival features competitions on clay body painting, clay sculpture, and solo and tribal dances involving clay-wrapped participants gyrating to the beat of ethnic music.

Artists from all over Negros will show their talents in ethic music, dance, crafts and music, Vasquez says.

Mambukal's nearness to Kanlaon Volcano provides it with hot sulfur springs that are said to be medicinal.

The clay is said to improve one's skin, and mineral water from the springs is believed to cure chronic diarrhea, constipation and skin diseases, increase the flow of gastric juices, and improve appetite.

Local and foreign tourists, especially the Japanese, visit the resort to bathe in the warm water of its dipping pool and sauna baths to rid themselves of aches and pains.



PARTICIPANTS in the Mudpack Festival get ready for festivities. PHOTOS BY ANDY ALVAREZ/CONTRIBUTOR

As one relaxes in the soothing water, bats hang from branches of ancient trees, birds chirp and butterflies fly by.

Owned and managed by the provincial government, Mambukal nestles beneath a forest that cools the place.

A big mountain stream fed by several tributaries descends into seven falls and supplies water to the swimming pools and boating lagoon.

For the young and more athletic, climbing the falls is a unique way of communing with nature.

Another way to enjoy the lush greenery and interesting rock formations is to brave the canopy walk of many hanging bridges from huge trees.

And to shed off weight from holiday eating, one can go for the rock-climbing wall and the "slide for life."

One can also visit the butterfly garden or simply enjoy a stroll on paved paths.

The resort also has a conference hall, tourist lodge picnic huts, and comfortable air-conditioned cottages.

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Silay City family helps children go to school

SILAY CITY—A SCHOOL IN Silay City, Negros Occidental is helping children of farm workers break free from the cycle of poverty and some are now working as engineers and nurses in foreign countries.

This is because a family that could have otherwise just sat back and enjoyed the profits of their vast sugar lands chose to make a difference for others.

In 1964, their matriarch Marietta Ledesma started the St. Francis of Assisi School in Hacienda Tinihaban, Silay City, because she wanted to provide farm children with education better than what was being provided in public schools.

"My grandmother believed that given quality Christian education for free, children of farm workers would not have to be forever stuck to working on the farm, they could develop their full potential," her granddaughter Carmela "Micmic" Abello Golez, 37, said.

When their grandmother died in 1979, their grandfather, Edgardo Ledesma, continued the tradition of free education until he died in 1994, Golez said. After his death, however, "the vision sort of got lost," for a period of seven years, said Carmela's brother, Roberto "Robin" Abello Jr., 36.

Continuing the vision

Robin said he and Micmic belong to the third generation of their family and they wanted to bring back the tradition of free education at the school their grandmother started.

"My grandmother wanted to give children of farm workers a chance for a better life outside of the farm," Micmic said, "because for a lot of them their parents and their grandparents before them worked on the farm."

"We want them to know that there's life beyond the farm, that they can pursue a different career," she said.

But as the school expanded by accepting children outside of the Ledesma farm, funding from Hacienda Tinihaban was no longer enough to keep up with the free education program.

"My grandfather, when he died, left money for the school but it was not enough for the scholarships for the poor," Robin said.

Micmic said they started charging a minimal fee for students who were not from sugar farms and for those who could afford the fees, but the children from the farms still received free education.

Because of the funding shortage, Micmic said they decided to establish the Tapulanga Foundation Inc. in 2001.

Today, the foundation mainly provides scholarships for students of St. Francis of Assisi School who not only come from Hacienda Tinihaban but from other parts of Silay City and the adjoining Talisay City and EB Magalona town.

Micmic said St. Francis now has 370 students in pre-school, grade school and high school.

The school is supervised by the University of St. La Salle based in Bacolod City that helps with curriculum development.

The high school department, which opened only last year, has classrooms with large windows to let in maximum light and the breeze from a nearby creek.

St. Francis of Assisi School not only educates its students inside the classrooms, it also provides many other opportunities for the children to go on field trips, watch movies, concerts and plays, learn how to use computers, get exposure to theater arts, have swimming lessons, annual recollections and more.

Tapulanga Foundation was founded "with the vision to share God's gifts and good news," Robin stressed.

Micmic is its executive director while Robin is president.

Micmic holds a degree in economics from the University of the Philippines at Los Baños.

Robin has an undergraduate degree in computer science, a master's degree in software engineering from the Carnegie Mellon University in Maryland, and is married to Kate, an obstetrician-gynecologist.

Robin and his wife live in the United States but send a lot of their earnings back to the Philippines to help run the school and also raise funds for more scholarships for the poor.

How to help

Robin said those who wish to help them in their mission may get more information at the Tapulanga Foundation's website www.tapulanga.org. Information at the website states that $150 can provide high school scholarship and $125 an elementary school scholarship for a year.

Tapulanga Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization that aside from education, also provides health care and micro-credit opportunities, Micmic said.

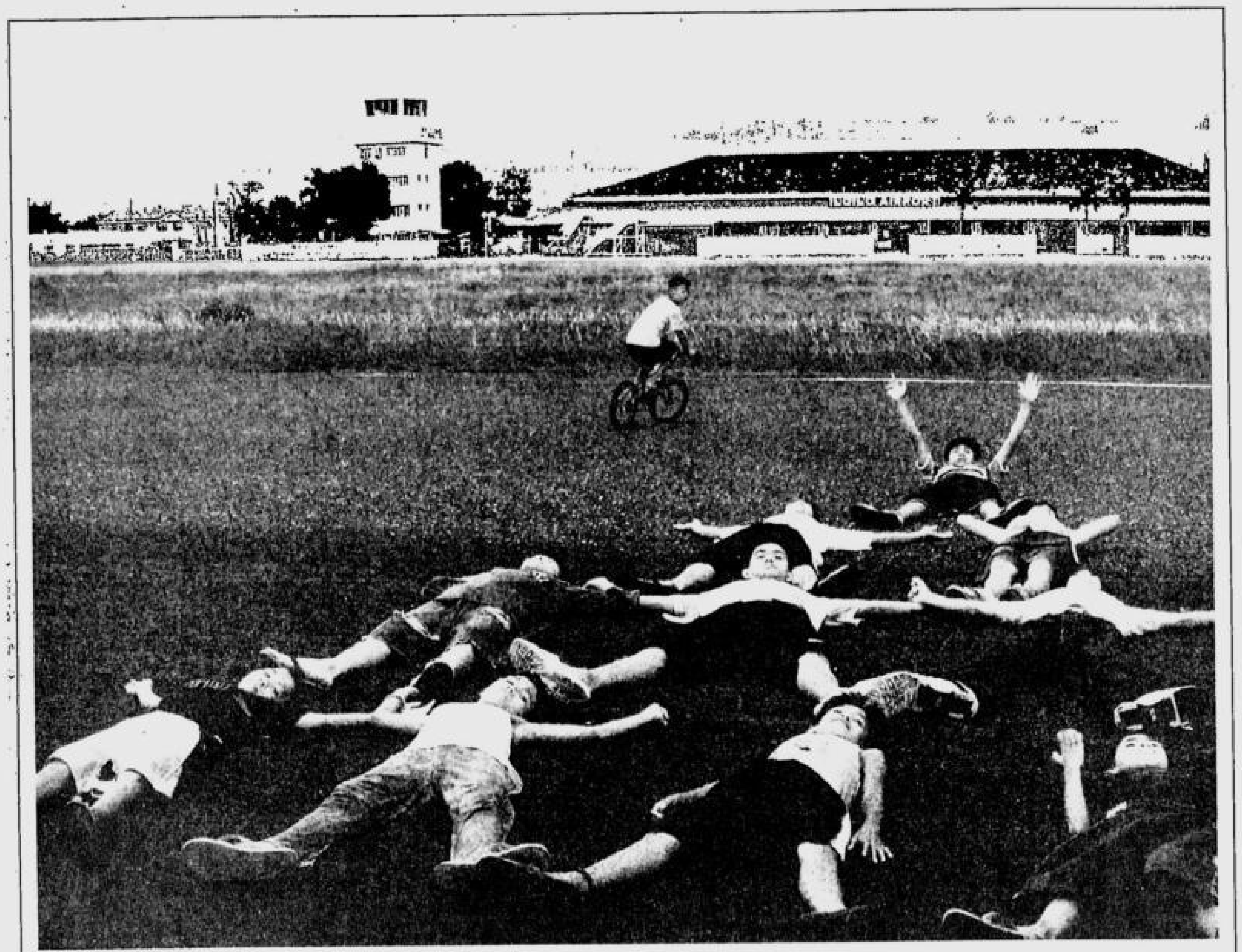
She said their cousin is a pediatrician so all their students get free annual medical checkups including deworming and immunization. When Robin's wife, Kate, visits, the mothers also get free checkups, she added.

Micmic said the foundation also provides free eye checkups and glasses because they noticed that some of the students did badly in school because they could not see.

To help farm workers increase their livelihood so that they will hopefully be able to send their children to college, Tapulanga started a micro-credit fund in 2005 to provide opportunities for small-scale entrepreneurship in the Hacienda Tinihaban and neighboring communities.

Robin said he and his wife took out personal loans in the United States for the micro credit loans that they give out at zero to five percent interest with no collateral to wives of sugar workers to start businesses such as piggery and *sari-sari* (retail) stores.

But Micmic and Robin are not the only Abello siblings doing their share at helping. Their brother Jose Ramon, 26, a Communication Arts graduate of Ateneo de Manila University, teaches at their school, while another brother Jay, 35, who is into the television and film industry, has also held photo exhibits to raise funds for scholarships. *Carla P. Gomez*



FREEDOM

ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Children take over the runway of the old Iloilo Airport, turning it into a vast playground. The old airport ceased operations after 70 years of servicing millions of passengers.

Wife of accused Campbell killer says media cruel

By Melvin Gascon
Inquirer Northern Luzon

LAGAWE, IFUGAO—THE WIFE of the lone suspect in the killing of United States Peace Corps volunteer Julia Campbell assailed the alleged sensational media coverage of the case, which, she said, supposedly subjected her husband to trial by publicity.

"The media has gone overboard. The media condemned my husband," said Grace Duntugan, 24, wife of Juan Donald Duntugan who is facing murder charges for killing Campbell on April 8 in Banaue town.

Juan Donald Duntugan entered a plea of "not guilty" before Judge Ester Piscoso-Flor of the regional trial court here during his arraignment on Wednesday.

Admission

The provincial prosecutor's office claimed that Duntugan killed Campbell, "with qualifying and aggravating circumstances of cruelty, treachery, evident premeditation, and abuse of superior strength."

In his statement issued to the police, Duntugan admitted that he killed Campbell, but only in a sudden, blind rage after he mistook her to be his long-time enemy in Barangay Batad in Banaue.

But Grace said her husband had been a victim of cruelty by the media.

Since the murder, she said she had tried to avoid media interviews, hoping that the issue would just die down.

But speaking to the INQUIRER at the courtroom during Wednesday's arraignment, Grace lamented that the media treated her husband "badly."

Played up

"*Pinalabas nila na para siyang isang napakasamang kriminal. Inamin nga niya, pero andami nilang inilalabas sa media na hindi naman totoo* (Media reports portrayed my husband like a hardened criminal. Yes, he admitted to the killing, but the media kept on reporting things that were not true)," she said.

During the court proceedings, Grace appeared annoyed whenever video and still cameras were directed at her husband.

"My husband surrendered [to the police] and admitted to the killing in his desire that the case would move on quietly. But it has not turned out that way because the media have kept on playing up the issue," she said in Ilocano.

Threat

With Duntugan detained at the Ifugao District jail in Barangay Tiger Hill in nearby Kiangan town, Grace said she and her children had to return to Batad in Banaue, despite earlier concerns of a possible backlash by villagers who may have been angered by the threat of a decline in tourist arrivals following Campbell's death.

She said she has tried to make ends meet for her and their two children by tending a small store in Batad. She said she would also have to worry about earning for her occasional visits to her husband or attendance in court hearings.

"[My store] is our only source of livelihood now. I have to face the reality that I would be raising my children alone," she said.

DENR closes Bacolod factory for pollution

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—ENVIRONMENT Secretary Angelo Reyes has ordered Victorias Milling Co. (VMC) to cease its operations in Victorias City until it corrects its environmental violations.

Reyes, in his cease and desist order (CDO), also directed VMC to shoulder the cost of the rehabilitation of the Malihao River in Victorias City, 34 km north of Bacolod City. The rehabilitation would include dredging, flushing of the accumulated wastes and aeration of the river system.

VMC president Abelardo Bugay yesterday said the company has started to address the problems in the Victorias City sugar mill to ensure that it would be ready for the milling season expected to start in the first week of September.

Reyes said he issued the order in response to a complaint of Canetown Subdivision residents regarding ash fall, allegedly coming from the smoke stacks of the company's plant.

The DENR also received complaints of odor and water pollution in Malihao River.

Reyes noted that the VMC discharges caused the pungent odor in the river and significantly contributed to the pollution of the river system.

In his order, Reyes directed VMC to cease and desist from operating its equipment that caused the pollution and replace it with new ones or repair it.

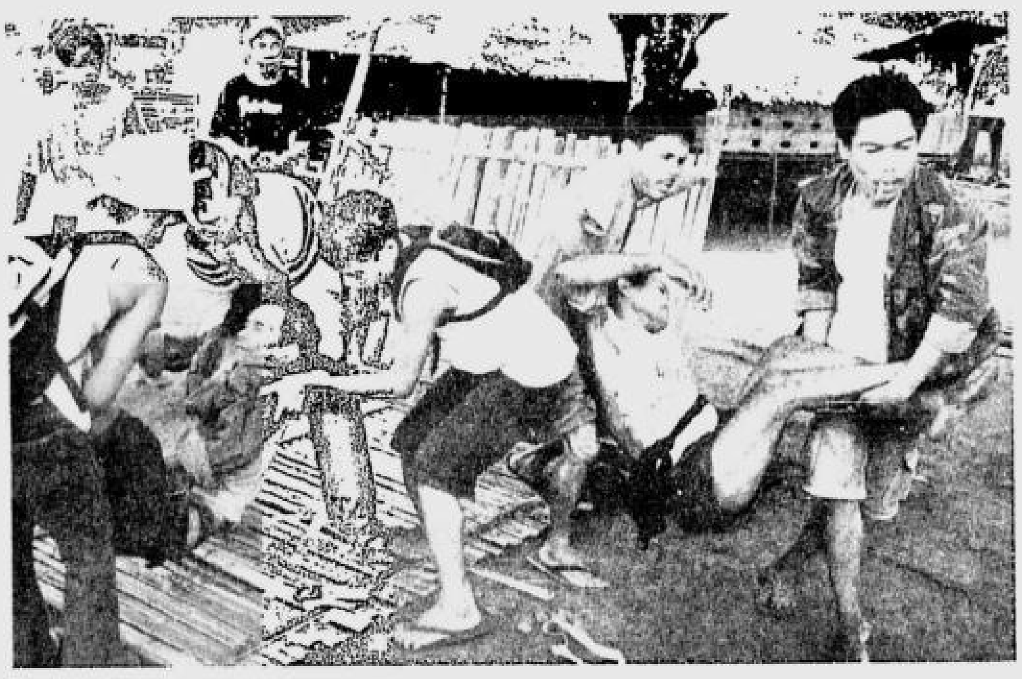
No temporary lifting order will be issued unless the VMC complies with the requirements of the board, especially "the institution of physical improvements for its water treatment facilities as well as its fugitive particulate emissions," said Reyes.

Bugay said water in the Malihao River became stagnant and emitted foul odor due because it was drying up as a result of El Niño.

Bugay said the VMC used three suction pipes to ease the flow of water in the river.

VMC is also committed to putting up a cooling tower to address water pollution, he said.

Bugay said the firm was doing repairs at the mill. He also expressed confidence the company could put the measures in place to convince the DENR to lift the order before the milling season starts.



LAND REFORM is as chaotic as this scene of farmers carrying their wounded colleagues following a clash with guards at Hacienda Velez-Malaga in La Castellana, Negros Occidental. JIMMY DOMINGO/CONTRIBUTOR

CARP balance in C. Luzon: 20,000 has

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THE BALANCE of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in Central Luzon has been down to only 20,147 hectares as of last May and could be distributed to farmers depending on the program's extended deadline and additional funds, a Department of Agrarian Reform official said.

"If we have the resources, within three to four years *matatapos yun* (those will be completed)," Teofilo Inocencio, DAR regional director, told the INQUIRER on Thursday.

He said the remaining targets are mostly settlements, government-owned lands and landed estates in Nueva Ecija, Zambales and Tarlac.

For the CARP, the DAR regional office has reported the acquisition and distribution of at least 410,112 hectares, or 95.32 percent, of the total 430,259-hectare target since 1988 when Congress approved the CARP law or Republic Act 6657.

Aging law

At least 46 percent (189,155 hectares) of lands under CARP in the region were distributed during the Ramos administration, 30 percent (121,554 hectares) during the Aquino administration, 12 percent (49,407 hectares) during the Arroyo administration and 6 percent each (24,801 hectares and 25,195 hectares) during the Marcos and Estrada administrations.

The bulk of the lands were given out in northern and southern Nueva Ecija at 96,397 hectares and 73,506 hectares, respectively.

At least 72,652 hectares were dispersed in Tarlac, 58,087 hectares in Pampanga, 46,510 hectares in Bulacan, 31,132 hectares in Zambales, 19,468 hectares in Bataan and 12,360 hectares in Aurora.

But the report showed that more than half of the lands, at 212,985 hectares, were acquired through Operation Land Transfer, a process began under Presidential Decree 27 of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos.

National trend

Only 8 percent, or 31,811 hectares, were covered through compulsory acquisition. This low rate followed the national trend where out of the 1.505 million hectares covered by compulsory acquisition, only 16 percent or 240,000 hectares were handed out to farmers, a DAR central office report showed.

The CARP in the region also allowed leasehold contracts on 116,362 hectares. This scheme was done in tenanted areas retained by landowners. High land rent was the usual complaint of farmers that agreed to the scheme.

Agrarian Reform Secretary Nasser Pangandaman said on Wednesday that the "move to continue agrarian reform beyond its deadline in 2008 is crucial to all stakeholders."

Not only were there unmet targets. He said there are also 1.077 million hectares of "newly discovered" private agricultural lands that could be covered by the CARP.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources, DAR's partner agency for the CARP, still has to distribute 581,813 hectares of public land.

Pangandaman said the proposed additional years for the CARP will also focus on helping the program's beneficiaries to become entrepreneurs.

"The program is multi-phased. It is not only giving lands and providing roads and bridges," he said.

Visayas record

But in Eastern Visayas, the DAR said at least 130,000 more hectares need to be placed under CARP.

At least 195,000 farmers benefited from CARP in the region, according to Joel Alsmith Soria, DAR regional information officer.

He said more than 300,000 hectares had been distributed in the region.

"This is a satisfactory performance," Soria said.

The biggest number of beneficiaries (96,091) came from Leyte, followed by Eastern Samar (30,145), Samar (27,553), Northern Samar (21,879), Southern Leyte (10,491) and Biliran (9,788). All of them now possess land titles, according to the DAR. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon with a report from Joey Gabieta, Inquirer Visayas*

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EUROPE KO TO ON THE SPOT PAINTING CONTEST AT THE PODIUM

Kids aged 10 to 13 years old are invited to join in the Europe Ko To On the Spot Painting Contest on Sunday, June 24 at The Podium's Lounge Area beginning at 1:30 PM.

A joint project of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Philippines and The Podium, the contest is in line with the 50th Anniversary of the Treaty of Rome. Open to Filipino kids enrolled in both public and private schools, it also celebrates the long-standing relationship between the EU and the Philippines to generate a deeper interest in Europe among the young.

HE Ambassador Alistair MacDonald of the Delegation of the European Commission to the Philippines says the contest was conceptualized to ask Filipino children to use their artistic talents to express what they think about the European Union and the integration of Europe. Noting that there are many global talents in the Philippines, he says that this contest "is an opportunity for Filipino children to express their creative potential and at the same time discover the European Union.

Great prizes are in store for the winning works from The Podium's tenants like the SM Appliance Center, Montre, Café Mediterranean, Contract Design, and Ergo Kids. They will also receive a trophy, a medal, and special prizes from the Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines.

Participants should come to The Podium on June 24 at 1:30 PM. The on the spot drawing contest will be held from 1:30-3:30 PM. Entries must adhere to the theme Europe Ko To: 50 Years of the European Union in the Philippines in the Eyes of the Filipino Youth. Drawings must be able to present perceptions about the EU and European Integration.

All entries must be drawn using either colored pencil and / or crayola on an illustration board measuring 18 x 24 inches. Participants must bring in their own materials. Entries will be judged according to the following: Relevance to the Theme 50%, Technique 25%, and Composition 25%.

All winning entries submitted to the contest will be considered as shared property between the Delegation of the European Commission to the Philippines, and may be used as publicity tools with full credit to the winners. These will also be displayed at The Podium for a week.

The Europe Ko To On the Spot Drawing Contest is the second time that EU and The Podium have collaborated on art contests for kids. The first Europe Ko To Drawing contest held last year was participated in by hundreds of children.

ADVT

More stories on A23 to 26

Aces crush Beermen for 2-0 lead

Games Tomorrow (Araneta Coliseum)
4:05 p.m.—Red Bull vs. Talk 'N Text
6:35 p.m.—San Miguel Beer vs. Alaska

By Musong R. Castillo

AFTER WINNING IN A MANNER deemed ugly, Alaska showed that it can triumph impressively.

The Aces held San Miguel Beer to eight points in the first period, 25 at the half, 38 after three quarters then crushed the Beermen, 93-68, last night to take an imposing 2-0 lead in their PBA Fiesta Cup semifinal duel at the Araneta Coliseum.

"It was just one of those nights, I guess," said coach Tim Cone later. "And we're just fortunate to be on top on this given night."

In the second game Talk 'N Text evened things up with Red Bull with a 107-103 victory that knotted their series at 1-1.

Everything worked for the Aces—with Rosell Ellis hitting tripless, Reynel Hugnatan dishing off behind-the-back passes and Dale Singson completing a four-point play—as Alaska dealt the Beermen their worst beating in more than two seasons.

More importantly, it moved the Aces to within two more victories of their first title series appearance since the 2002 Governors Cup, which they lost to Purefoods.

And even if 23 of the 28 teams to take a 2-0 lead in a best-of-seven series have gone on to win, Cone refused to talk like this is over, remembering fully well how Purefoods erased a 1-3 deficit against the Aces to win their Philippine Cup semis series last year.

"I refuse to smell it, there will be no more smelling from now on," Cone said. "I'll just eat it if it's on the table already. Otherwise, we will continue working."

Last night's victory was the complete opposite of how the Aces opened up the series, when they had to wait until Danny Ildefonso's jumper from deep right corner rattled out before enjoying a 100-99 win.

In Game 2, Cone had his entire starting crew on the bench when the final 12 minutes came as the Aces led by as many as 33 at one point in the fourth.

Ellis went on to finish with 17 points and 14 rebounds in just 32 minutes and the first six Alaska scorers actually outscored the entire San Miguel squad for the game with Hugnatan adding 13, John Ferriols 12, Willie Miller 11, Eddie Laure nine and Nic Belasco eight, respectively.

The scores:

First Game

ALASKA 93—Ellis 17, Hugnatan 13, Ferriols 12, Miller 11, Laure 9, Belasco 8, Cariaso 6, Thoss 4, Singson 4, Aban 3, Cortez 2, Bajar 2, Juinio 2.

SAN MIGUEL BEER 68—Young 20, Villanueva 16, Ildefonso 8, Pena 6, Espinas 5, Gonzales 3, Cablay 3, Racela 3, Tenorio 2, Wilson 2, Adriano 0, Calaguio 0.

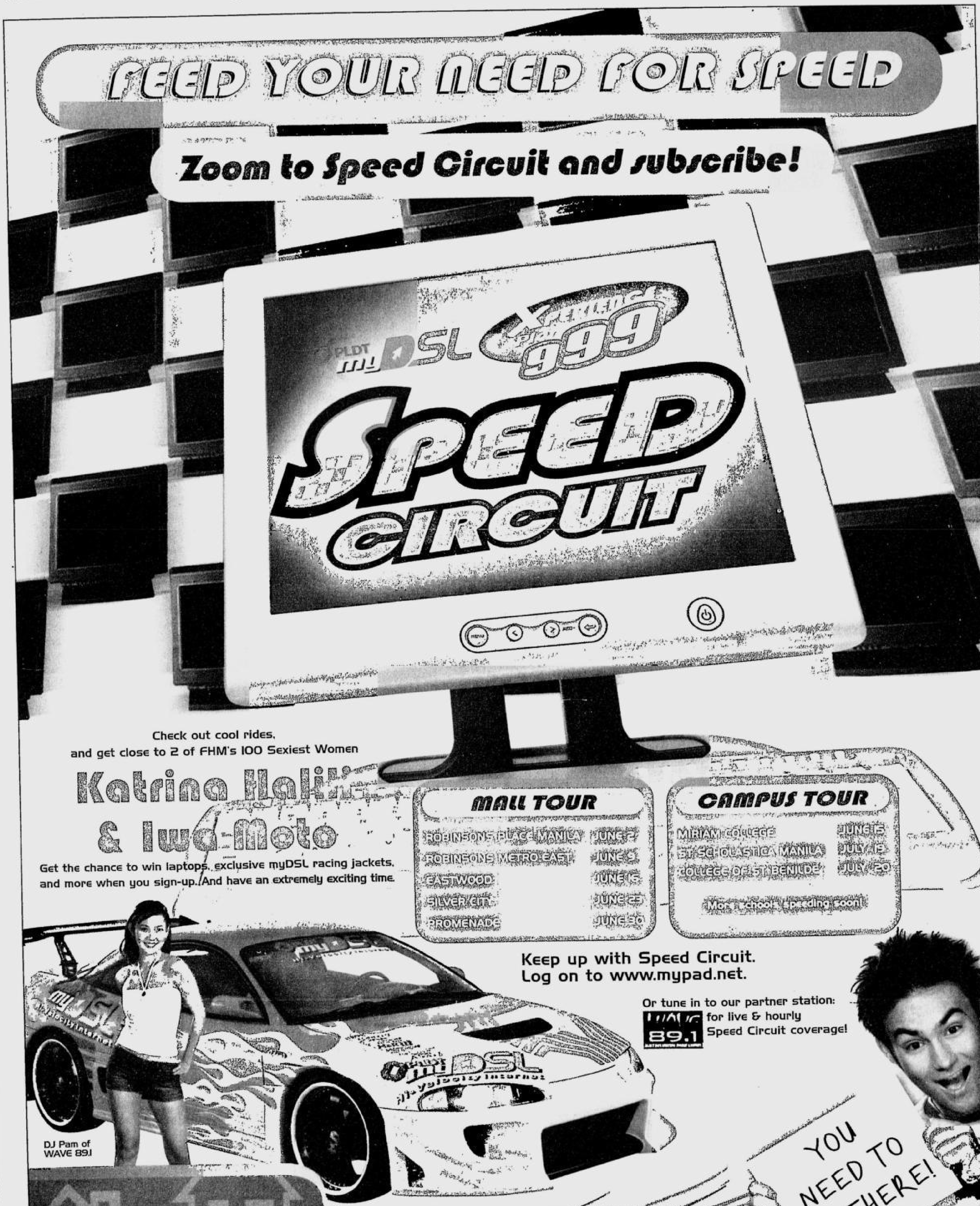
Quarters: 25-8, 45-25, 70-38, 93-68

Second Game

TALK 'N TEXT 107—Cardona 34, Sullinger 25, Carey 17, De Ocampo 14, Belano 10, Allado 5, Fran 2, Washington 0, Billones 0.

RED BULL 103—Penny 30, Sharma 18, Valenzuela 12, Hrabak 7, Fonacier 6, Cruz 6, Baguio 6, Camaso 6, Najorda 4, Alvarez 4, Robinson 4, Ybanez 0.

Quarters: 27-23, 43-47, 69-72, 107-103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'Raid a tourist turnoff'

Intramuros drug dens suspects face raps

By Jerome Aning and Tina G. Santos

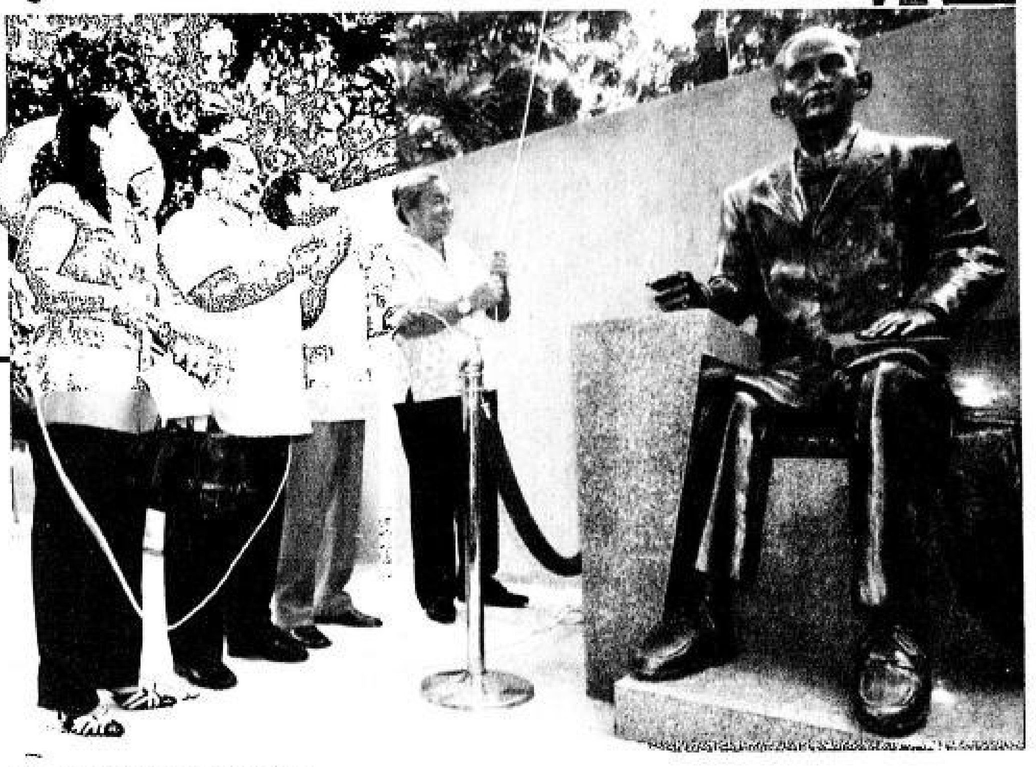
THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM AUTHORITY (PTA) yesterday blamed the Intramuros Administration (IA) for the continued operation of alleged drug dens inside Intramuros, Manila.

"The recent raid in Intramuros would definitely send a wrong signal that it is no longer safe to walk inside the historic walls and might even scare away tourists," said PTA general manager Robert Dean Barbers.

The police raided the other day the alleged drug dens and arrested more than a hundred people. Of the 107 arrested, 31 tested negative for drug use and were released.

Five of six people covered by search warrants reportedly tested positive. Three of the five were identified as Zayra Denanila, 23; Romeo Reyes "Alias Kuba (hunchback)," 41; and Marilou Velasquez, 29. They allegedly maintained a drug den in the compound. A sixth suspect, known

RAID/ A20



IN MABINI'S HONOR
Mayor Lito Atienza leads Manila government officials at the unveiling of a monument of Apolinario Mabini, also called the "brains" of the Philippine Revolution, along Quirino Avenue in Manila. *(Story on Page A20)*
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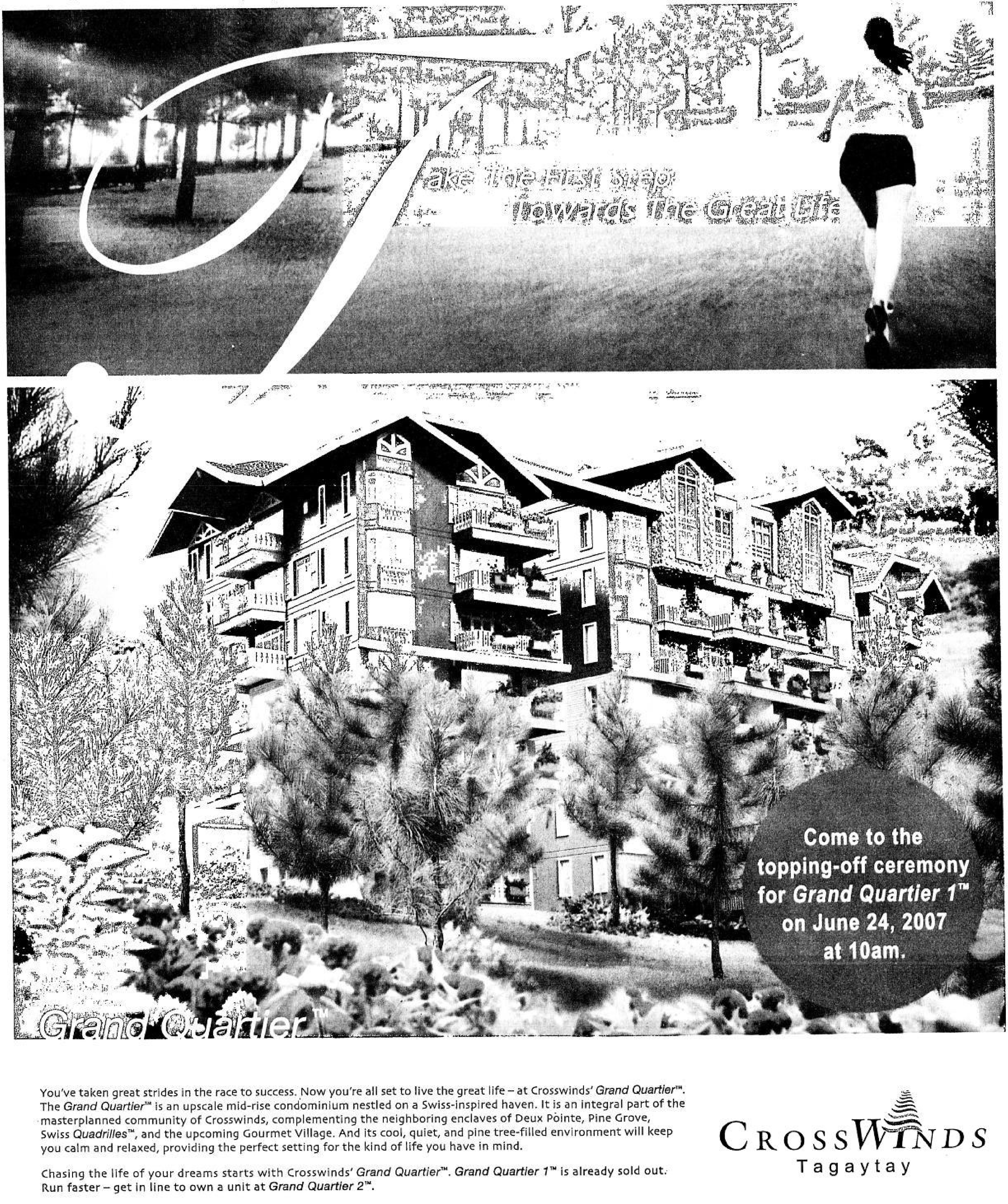
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CROSSWINDS
Tagaytay

Mabini now 'sits' on street named after him

By Allison W. Lopez

A CORNER OF THE SIDEWALK in front of the Ospital ng Maynila has been given by the City of Manila to a person with disability. He is, however, not just any ordinary man.

At the blessing and unveiling yesterday of the new monument of Apolinario Mabini, the "Sublime Paralytic," outgoing Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said jeepney drivers, residents and students who cross Mabini Street would now know why a road was named after him.

"It's a small project, but here on this part of Mabini (corner Quirino Avenue), everyone who passes will remember Mabini's heroism," said the mayor who was born in the district ... "Many people do not know Mabini and what he did to deserve a main street named after him," he said.

The 6-ft., 6-inch cast-bronze monument designed by Abdulmari Imao Jr. was unveiled to the public at 11 a.m. yesterday as part of the city's 436th foundation day celebration.

A marker beside the sculpture that showed the "Brains of the Katipunan" sitting and holding a quill, described him as "a lawyer, writer and patriot" who became the primary adviser of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo on June 12, 1898.

Though born on July 23, 1864 in Talaga, Tanauan, Batangas, Mabini was also recognized as a Manileño. He studied at Colegio de San Juan de Letran and University of Santo Tomas. He lived in the city after he was released from detention by the American forces in 1900.

Though he was paralyzed because of polio, Mabini's brain was sharp. He produced "The True Decalogue," his own 10 commandments for Filipinos.

In the decalogue, he exhorted his countrymen to love and honor God, above all things; then to love their country more than they love themselves and to secure its freedom and happiness because "if she is happy, happy shall you and your family be."

Two of the hero's descendants, Primo Mabini Rodriguez and Nelita Mabini Galicia, graced yesterday's unveiling.

Mabini, who was also appointed president of the Cabinet and secretary of foreign affairs, died of cholera on May 13, 1903 at the age of 39.

BABY ERIN PASIMIO

1 year-old Erin needs liver transplant

SERENE ISABEL "ERIN" PASIMIO is not your usual patient in need of a liver donor.

The daughter of Francis Robert "Sonny" Pasimio of 15 Moscow Street, Eastville Filinvest, Antipolo City, is only a year old, too young to undergo surgery.

But if a liver transplant is her only hope to survive and live a normal life, her father, an AB Economics graduate of the Ateneo University, is willing to take the risk.

"The doctors feel that the surgery should happen as soon as possible to give her a chance," Pasimio said in his e-mail to the INQUIRER.

The donor must be below 50 years old, with no infection or disease if terminally ill or brain-dead and the blood type must be "A" positive or "O," according to Pasimio, who wrote about his daughter's ordeal in this newspaper's Young Blood column last year.

At the time, the baby was only two months old. A KASAI procedure was done on her in the hope it would delay the need for a liver transplant.

Erin has been at the University of Santo Tomas Hospital in Manila for a month now and will be transferred to the National Kidney Transplant Institute (NKTI) once a liver donor is found.

For those who want to help, please call Sonny at 0918-908-0652. *Santiago R. Alcantara*

Burger chain denies it has no business permit

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE PRESIDENT OF A POPular burger chain decried yesterday the closure of its outlets in Quezon City for lack of the required business permits.

"There is no truth to the allegations of Quezon City Market Development and Administration Department (MDAD) chief Neil Lina that only 21 of 85 Burger Machine outlets in the city are operating with business permits," Gilmore Foods Corporation's Tessa Acuna said in a letter to the INQUIRER.

Acuna attached photocopies of official receipts issued by the licensing and permits office of the city government, proving that they paid for the permits.

"Burger Machine is a homegrown business that started in Quezon City more than a quarter century ago and has been operating legitimately since, providing hundreds of jobs in the city and thousands more nationwide," Acuna said in her letter. She added that she was saddened by the "unfairness of the situation."

"We are therefore looking into filing administrative, civil and criminal charges against the individuals who have participated in the harassment we have been experiencing for the last six months," Acuna said.

Lina, however, said the official receipts were not equivalent to actual business permits.

"They may have paid the fees required to obtain business permits, but there are requirements they still have to satisfy in order to be considered legitimate by the city government such as occupation and sanitary permits," Lina said. He added he had yet to receive copies of the receipts Acuna said were proofs of their payment.

He added that Gilmore Foods Corporation still owed the city government P10 million in unpaid taxes and fees.

Badmouthing from the safety of a closed-door confab

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE INCOMING CONGRESS SHOULD investigate reports that water coming out of the faucets in Metro Manila is contaminated with bacteria and fecal matter.

The reports cannot be ignored as they came from a private company that tests the quality of water, food and cosmetics.

If the water from the faucets of Manila Water and Maynilad Water Services is safe, how come residents have to buy bottled water for drinking?

Gone are the days when one drank water straight from the faucet in Manila.

* * *

During a meeting called by a government water regulatory body to discuss the implications of the reported unhygienic condition of Metro's water, officials of the two water agencies allegedly took turns berating Pinky Tobiano, owner of Qualibet that made the study.

One of those who attended the meeting told me the poor woman cried as a result of the intense bullying.

Shame on you, guys, doing that to a woman!

My source told me Jess Matubis, spokesperson of Manila Water, called me names during the closed-door meeting for my adverse comments on the two water agencies.

I wonder if Matubis could say those things to my face?

* * *

My sources at the piers say the name of a Cabinet member always cropped up when some cargoes, suspected to contain misdeclared or undervalued goods, were seized by agents of the Bureau of Customs.

The Cabinet member reportedly has a very luxurious lifestyle.

He owns a yacht anchored at the Manila Bay where he invites the most beautiful nightclub hostesses (euphemistically called guest relations officers or GROs) in Metro Manila for nights of orgies, according to a GRO I was able to interview.

Among the high official's guests are top customs and police officials.

The official, according to my source, didn't count the money he handed over to the women. He gave out bundles of money as if he was handing out candies to children.

I wonder where he got all those oodles of money.

'Raid a tourist turnoff'

From page A19

only as "Nanay Amelia," remains at large.

Mariano said they are now preparing charges against those who were found positive for drug use and possession.

Saying he was "surprised" by the news, Barbers wondered if the IA had done anything about the presence of the alleged drug dens before.

IA said it knew of the illegal drug activities since the middle of last year.

Mayette Allaga, IA chief of urban planning and community development said it was at the agency's request that the Manila Police District raided the suspected shabu kiosks on Legazpi Street in Barangay 654.

"We received complaints ... from schools, residents and business establishments so we asked the police to see if the reports were true," Allaga said in a phone interview.

She said that a few weeks ago, IA Administrator Dominador Ferrer Jr. formally raised the issue with the MPD anti-illegal drugs special operations task force.

Meanwhile, residents of the area accused the raiding policemen of harassment.

"I was begging them to let me get some clothes and milk for my baby but they wouldn't heed my pleas," said a 30-year-old woman. She requested anonymity for the sake of her husband who was among those arrested. Another resident, Norma, 45, claimed the money in her closet and her daughter's cell phone were gone after the raid.

Policemen, meanwhile, accused barangay officials of keeping mum about the alleged shabu dens.

Supt. Roderick Mariano, chief of the Manila Police District's anti-narcotics unit, said they were investigating if some barangay and police officials were involved as "protectors" of the illegal drugs operations.

He added that he had been told that some barangay officials apparently knew about the existence of the shabu dens.

METRO BRIEFS

San Juan fest

SAN Juan is temporarily closing to traffic some of its streets like N. Domingo and F. Blumentritt, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon, today and tomorrow as the new city celebrates the feast day of its patron saint, St. John the Baptist tomorrow with parades, concerts, and the long-running custom of dousing water on residents and visitors. City officials led by Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito, have slated activities for the weekend celebration, starting with a drum and lyre competition on Saturday morning and ending with a Mass on Sunday, 6 p.m., at the St. John the Baptist Church.

Kristine L. Alave

One to go

MANILA policemen arrested yesterday two of three suspects believed to be behind the killing of two women whose bodies were found inside separate drums filled with cement Wednesday night in Quiapo, Manila. Arrested were Cesar Luma, a vendor and resident of Sampaloc, Manila; and Garry Panglilinan, of Quiapo. The third suspect, Faisal Katiang, a native of Parang, Maguindanao, remains at large as he managed to elude pursuing policemen. One of the two victims was identified as Sarah Ampaso, a vendor. The bodies, bearing stab wounds, were found under a shanty in Quiapo's "Vietnam Village" at around 10 p.m.

Tina G. Santos

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Thaksin charged with corruption

BANGKOK—THAI PROSECUTORS Thursday laid formal criminal corruption charges against Thaksin Shinawatra in the first case against the ousted premier to reach court since last September's coup.

Thaksin and his wife Pojaman, who are both out of the country, have been charged over a controversial land purchase in 2003, prosecutors said.

They were each charged with three violations of anti-corruption laws, on accusations that Thaksin illegally influenced the deal to allow Pojaman to buy the land from a government agency at a bargain price.

"Prosecutors have filed a case against Thaksin, who is the first defendant, and Pojaman as the second defendant," prosecutor Nanthasak Poonsuk told reporters.

But the graft case was swiftly overshadowed when Thaksin launched a formal bid worth $162.6 million for English Premiership football club Manchester City, and the club backed the terms.

It takes the controversial former premier a step closer to ownership of the high-profile club, which will likely keep Thaksin in the headlines in Thailand, where he is facing a slate of corruption investigations.

Thursday's charges come just days after $1.52 billion of assets belonging to Thaksin and his family were frozen as part of the ongoing investigations.

The junta has cited corruption and abuse of power as the key reason for Thaksin's ouster in last year's bloodless coup, and is under pressure to pin down the billionaire businessman on graft charges.

Thaksin has been in exile since he was ousted, while his wife was hospitalized in Singapore earlier this week.

Both Thaksin and Pojaman could be jailed for up to 13 years and each face a fine of up to $6,250 if convicted of Thursday's three charges, which were heard by the Supreme Court.

A special panel of nine judges tasked with hearing political crimes will decide on July 10 whether to accept the case.

If it goes ahead, prosecutors would be required to present Thaksin and his wife in person during the opening arguments.

Pichit Cheunban, a lawyer for the couple, said Thaksin would decide whether to return after the court decides on taking the case.

Although the government has insisted Thaksin would be allowed to return home to defend himself in court, the ex-premier's lawyer has voiced concerns about his safety in Thailand.

If the Shinawatras fail to appear, the court could throw out the case, lawyers have said, citing the court's procedural rules.

At the end of the trial, neither side would be able to appeal the verdict.

Prosecutors are seeking to have the five-hectare plot of land confiscated.

Pojaman bought the plot in Bangkok for the relatively cheap price of $24.1 million in 2003 from the Bank of Thailand's Financial Institution Development Fund.

AFP

NEPAL DEITY REUTERS

"Living Goddess" Kumari arrives during celebrations of the Lord Red Machindranath chariot festival in Katmandu June 21, 2007. The term "living goddess" is given to a pre-pubescent girl decked up as a goddess that people pray to.

WORLDBRIEFS

14 US soldiers killed in 48 hours in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Fourteen Americans were killed in combat in five incidents, most in Baghdad, in a 48-hour period ending Thursday, the US military announced. Notably, only one US soldier has died in the major military operations in Diyala province, where 300 to 500 fighters for the insurgent group al-Qaida in Mesopotamia are believed to be hiding. That death occurred earlier in the week. Suicide bombers struck Thursday in northern Iraq and in Baghdad. In the area around Hilla, about 30 miles south of Baghdad, a joint Iraqi-US operation was under way to capture or kill members of the militia linked to the anti-American cleric Muqtada al-Sadr. Most of the US deaths over the past two days were caused by roadside bombs, which were used in three of the five incidents. These bombs, known as improvised explosive devices, have been the biggest killers of Americans. *NYT*

Argentina renews claims to disputed Falkland islands

UNITED NATIONS—Twenty-five years after it lost a war to Britain over the Falklands, Argentina on Thursday renewed its claim to sovereignty over the disputed South Atlantic archipelago. Revisiting the issue for the 43rd year in a row, the UN General Assembly's decolonization committee heard the rival parties make their cases, and concluded the session by urging them to find a peaceful negotiated settlement. It urged Argentina and Britain "to consolidate the current process of dialogue and cooperation through the resumption of negotiations in order to find as soon as possible a peaceful solution," a resolution said. Argentine Foreign Minister Jorge Taiana stressed to the committee that the South Atlantic islands belong to his country and were "usurped" by the United Kingdom. The 74-day conflict was sparked after Argentine troops staged a surprise landing on the archipelago to assert their claim to the territory on April 2, 1982. The Argentines surrendered on June 14 after British troops marched into the capital, Port Stanley. The war left 649 Argentines, 255 British troops and three islanders dead. *AFP*

CIA to release documents on decades-old misdeeds

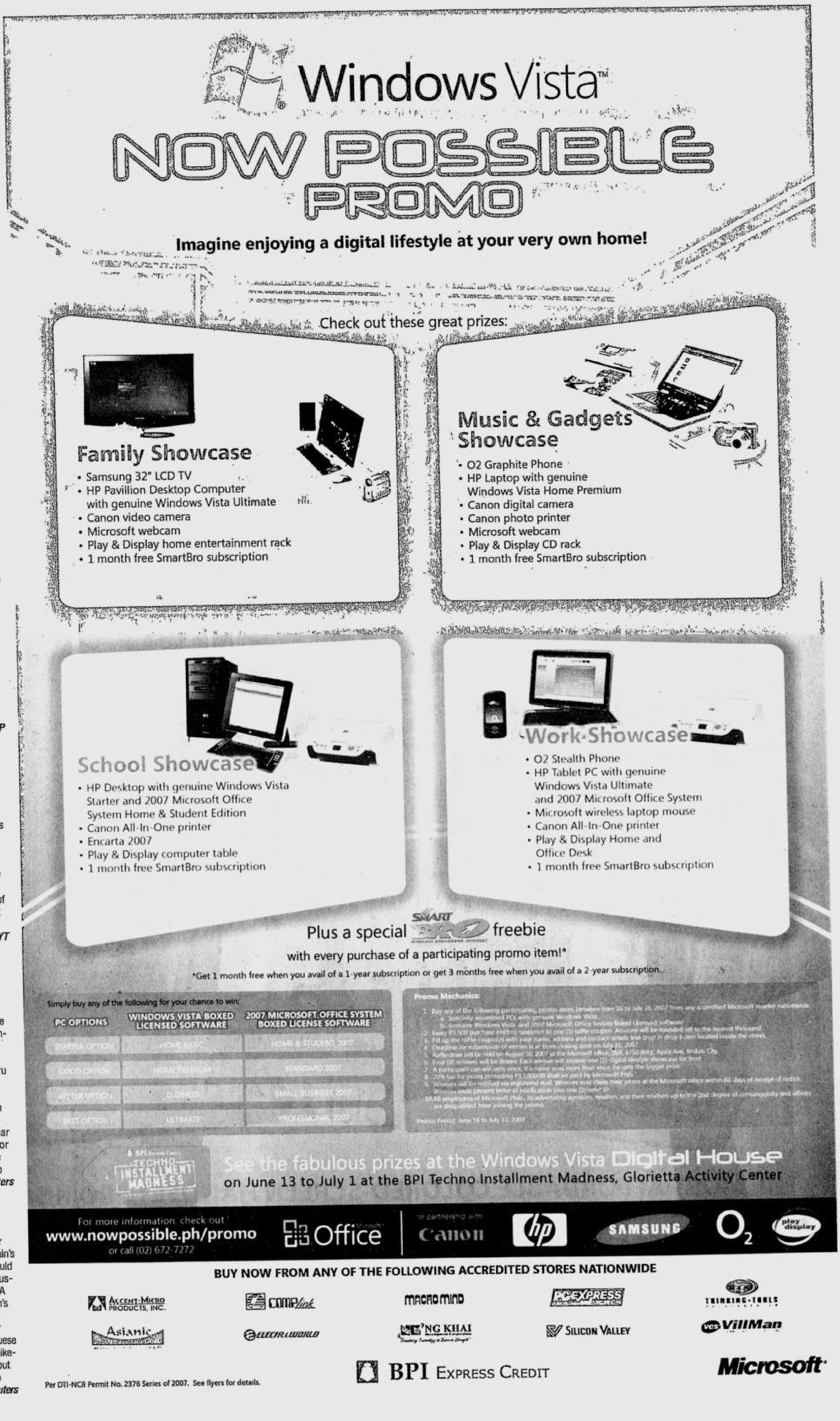
THE CIA will make public next week a collection of long-secret documents compiled in 1974 that detail domestic spying, assassination plots and other CIA misdeeds in the 1960s and early 1970s, the agency's director, Gen. Michael V. Hayden, said Thursday. In an address to a group of historians who have long pressed for greater disclosure of CIA archives, Hayden described the documents, known as the "family jewels," as "a glimpse of a very different time and a very different agency." He also directed the release of 11,000 pages of Cold War documents on the Soviet Union and China, which were handed out on compact discs at the meeting, in Chantilly, Va. *NYT*

Nigerian troops kill 12 in hostage rescue raid

YENAGOA, Nigeria—Nigerian troops killed 12 suspected militants and freed 10 hostages in a dawn raid on an Italian-operated oil facility in the Niger Delta on Thursday, the army said. The gunmen had overrun the Ogbainbiri flow station in Bayelsa state on Sunday, in a setback to moves by Nigeria's newly inaugurated president, Umaru Yar'Adua, to calm tensions in Africa's oil heartland. Italian oil company Eni had originally said 16 Nigerian workers and 11 soldiers were taken hostage, but the army said it rescued nine civilians and one soldier. It was not immediately clear what had happened to the remaining hostages or if the original numbers had been incorrect. One Agip worker drowned earlier this week trying to escape, local media reported. *Reuters*

Explosives found in Spain, tourist attacks feared

MADRID—Spanish police on Thursday found a car packed with explosives near seaside resorts on Spain's southern coast and said ETA Basque separatists could be planning summer attacks against the tourist industry. It was the first explosives find in Spain since ETA formally called off a ceasefire two weeks ago. Spain's Civil Guard found 130 kg (287 lb) of bomb making chemicals as well as timers and detonators in a car near the town of Ayamonte, 2 km from the Portuguese border. The Ford Focus car, hired in Portugal, was likely abandoned to avoid a nearby police checkpoint but the explosives found in its boot were not primed to detonate, the Civil Guard said. *Reuters*



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Prince William turns 25, gets part of Diana's wealth

PRINCE WILLIAM AFP

LONDON—BRITAIN'S PRINCE William turned 25 Thursday and became entitled to part of the multimillion-pound inheritance left to him by his late mother, Princess Diana.

The second in line to the throne is now allowed access to the income accrued on the 6.5 million pounds ($12.94 million) he was left in his mother's will after she died 10 years ago in a Paris car crash.

Royal officials said they do not discuss the young prince's financial arrangements, amid media speculation that he could now have access to between 250,000 pounds and 350,000 pounds per year.

But unnamed sources quoted by Britain's Press Association (PA) news agency said the future king will not touch Diana's cash for now.

"Nothing will change on his birthday," another source told the Daily Telegraph newspaper on Tuesday.

Diana left an estate worth 21 million pounds, most of it in stocks, shares, jewelry, dresses and personal items, plus the proceeds from the estimated 17-million-pound divorce settlement from Prince Charles in 1998.

Eight million pounds from her estate was paid in inheritance tax, leaving 12,966,022 pounds to be split equally between William and his younger brother Prince Harry, 22.

Each of the two 6.5 million pound shares is estimated to have grown to about nine million pounds following investment, according to the PA.

The terms of Diana's will meant that neither William nor Harry were entitled to touch the income from their inheritance until they reached 25, although it could be paid before that age at the discretion of trustees. *AFP*

Hardliners honor Bin Laden after Britain knights Rushdie

ISLAMABAD—A GROUP OF HARDLINE PAKISTANI Muslim clerics said on Thursday they had bestowed a religious title on Osama bin Laden in response to a British knighthood for author Salman Rushdie.

The Pakistan Ulema Council gave Bin Laden the title "Saifullah," or sword of Allah, in response to the knighthood awarded to Rushdie last week for services to literature.

Rushdie's novel, "The Satanic Verses" published in 1988, outraged many Muslims around the world. Muslims say it blasphemed against the Prophet Muhammad and ridiculed the Koran.

"If a blasphemer can be given the title 'Sir' by the West despite the fact he's hurt the feelings of Muslims, then a mujahid who has been fighting for Islam against the Russians, Americans and British must be given the lofty title of Islam, Saifullah," the council's chair, Tahir Ashrafi, told Reuters.

Bin Laden was one of many Arabs who helped Afghan mujahideen battle Soviet invaders in Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Pakistan and Iran have protested against the knighthood awarded by Britain's Queen Elizabeth and small demonstrations have been held in various parts of Pakistan and in Malaysia.

On Monday, Pakistan's parliament adopted a resolution condemning the knighthood and said Britain should withdraw it.

Religious Affairs Minister Mohammad Ejaz-ul-Haq, son of the late military president Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, told the assembly that if someone committed a suicide bombing to protect the honor of the Prophet Muhammad, his act was justified.

He later said he did not mean such attacks would be justified but was merely saying militants could use the knighthood as a justification.

However, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto said Haq should be dismissed, saying in a statement that Haq "had done a great disservice both to the image of Islam and the standing of Pakistan by calling for the murder of foreign citizens."

The speaker of the National Assembly has expunged Haq's comments from the record, citing the national interest.

Britain has defended the knighthood, stressing the importance of free speech and saying that it was part of a trend of honoring Muslims in the British community.

Rushdie was born to Muslim parents in India, prompting Muslims to accuse him of apostasy after "The Satanic Verses" was published.

The late Iranian supreme leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, issued a fatwa religious edict against Rushdie in 1989 calling for his death and forcing him into hiding for nine years.

In 1998 Iran's government formally distanced itself from the fatwa issued by Khomeini, but hardline groups in Iran regularly renew the call for his killing, saying Khomeini's fatwa is irrevocable. *Reuters*

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WHAT'S INSIDE

Pucay sizzles with 67, wins by 5 over Casas /A24

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Nadal, Roddick, Hewitt eyed as Federer challengers /A25

NCAA BLASTOFF

Lions begin title defense today

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WHETHER SAN BEDA HAS WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD A DYNASTY IN MEN'S basketball in the NCAA will be known today when the Red Lions open defense of their title against the Jose Rizal Heavy Bombers at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Red Lions and the Bombers collide at 2 p.m. after the hour-long opening ceremony, with JRU coach Ariel Vanguardia entertaining only faint hopes of tripping the top favorites from Mendiola.

Vanguardia had already conceded a championship slot to the Lions early in the week during the traditional gathering of coaches from the country's oldest collegiate cage league.

"Since PCU is not around, it is safe to say that San Beda is already a cinch for the finals," Vanguardia predicted.

The Philippine Christian University Dolphins, runners-up last year, were slapped a year-long ban for fielding illegitimate players in last season's high school tournament.

Mapua and Letran, both expected to figure prominently in the Final Four race, clash at 4 p.m. while Perpetual takes on San Sebastian in the nightcap at 6.

St. Benilde drew the opening-day bye.

With reigning Top Rookie-MVP Sam Ekwe, scoring leader Yousif Aljamal, sensational guard Pong Escobal and a host of role players, the Red Lions appear set for another title under new coach Frankie Lim.

Although Lim downplays his chances—"It's much harder to stay on top than being on top," he said—experts predict this year's fight will only be for second place.

Also with new coaches are the Cardinals, who have tapped Leo Isaac, and the Stags, now under Harbour Centre mentor Jorge Gallent.

Letran coach Louie Alas also considers the Red Lions as the team to beat while picking the Bombers and the Cardinals as second and third favorites.

"Nobody really stands out except for San Beda," concurred Perpetual's Bai Cristobal.

The Cardinals have been described as the "dark horse" this time due to an intact lineup led by Fil-Canadian Kelvin dela Peña.

The Heavy Bombers, who last won the title in 1972, finished tied for 6th last season after dropping seven of their first eight games. This time, however, they are parading six players standing 6-4 and above.

Cristobal lost vital cogs Khiel Misa and Fritz Bauzon but takes pride in acquiring the services of two Indonesians, a 6-9 and a 6-6.

The Knights, last year's third-placers, will be bannered by 10 rookies while the Blazers hope to improve on last year's campaign where they went on a 10-game losing spell.

ROMY HOMILLADA

JOHN Kier Abdon salutes the gallery after holing out on the 18th.

Abdon provides lone bright spot for RP bets

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HE SAID A FOUR-UNDER SHOULD WIN IT, but John Kier Abdon wanted to be very sure about it.

So the 16-year-old Filipino star capped a brilliant week with a closing six-under-par 66 yesterday to capture the boys' individual championship by seven strokes in the Asean schools golf championships at the Legends course of Manila Southwoods.

Abdon, a San Beda high school senior, finished with a 72-hole total of 270 after earlier rounds of 66-69-69, dethroning Malaysian champion Nicholas Fung Chee Yung, who closed out with a 73. He was tied with the Filipino after three rounds.

The win provided the lone bright spot for what was otherwise a bleak RP campaign.

Thailand pulled off a double whammy in the team championship and Dolnapa Phudthipinj capped the Thais' impressive show by clinching the girls' individual title over Singapore's Kristle Koh Pei Lin.

Phudthipin fired the day's best round of 65 to

ABDON/ A24

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Django rejoices in Hard Times

FILIPINO ACE FRANcisco "Django" Bustamante repeated over reigning US Open champion John Schmidt, 11-8, yesterday to rule the Hard Times Summer Jamboree 9-Ball Tournament at the Hard Times Billiards in Sacramento, California.

The 44-year-old Bustamante, who also bested Schmidt, 9-6, in the second round, received the top prize of $3,500 in the 72-man event.

Earlier, Bustamante took a bye in the first round then beat Schmidt, US-based Filipino Deomark Alpajora, 9-6, Joey Gebron, 9-0, Jeff Gregory, 9-0, Gerardo Jamito, 9-4, and Tyler Edey, 9-4, in succession for the hot-seat match.

Last April 1, Bustamante downed former world 9-ball champion Johnny Archer of the United States for the UPA Pro Tour event title at the Normandie Casino in Los Angeles, California.

His UPA Pro Tour victory gave Bustamante, playing out of the Puyat Sports stable, an outright berth in the main draw of the World Pool Championships in Manila this November. *Marlon Bernardino*

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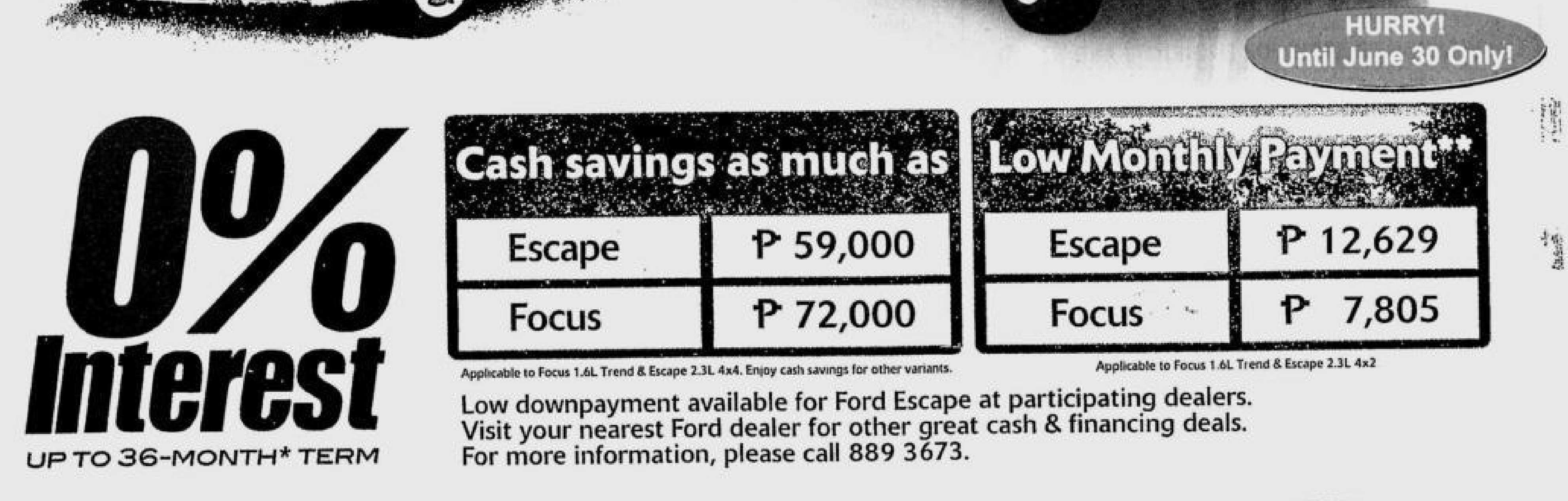

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NBC CAGING

Tagaytay Spring spills Davao

DAVAO CITY—TAGAYTAY SPRING COOKING Oil bounced back from a recent unexpected loss by whipping Montaña Pawnshop-Davao, 79-72, Thursday night to gain a first-place tie in the 2007 Spring-NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the Lagao gym here.

PBL veteran Larry Rodriguez produced another big game to power the Cooking Oil Masters to their eighth win in 11 games.

Rodriguez had 15 points, 14 rebounds and two steals as the team of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and league vice president Mayor Bambol Tolentino caught idle Firefly-Iligan at the top after being derailed 60-69 by MP Pacman GenSan in its last outing.

"We were off against GenSan," said Tagaytay Spring coach Efren "Yong" Garcia. "I told the boys to just work hard since we're on the road."

The Jewelers dropped to 7-10.

Iligan and Tagaytay Spring dispute solo leadership at 7 p.m. today in Iligan City.

The scores:

TAGAYTAY 79—Rodriguez 15, Epondulan 12, Reyes 11, Bolocan 11, Tajonera 9, De Castro 8, Mallari 4, Victolero 4, Yambao 3, Muñoz 2, Legaspi 0, Cuenca 0.

DAVAO 72—Fernandez 15, Araman 13, Ilanga 10, Panerio 8, Canlas 8, Espinosa 7, Abanes 4, Quibod 3, Jawod 2, Lamocha 2.

Quarters: 26-19, 41-35, 63-55, 79-72

Peña 3rd quickest in Zhuhai practice

ZHUHAI—DRIVING LIKE HE HAS not been away from the tracks for nearly three months, Dado Peña clocked the third best time in practice as he revved up for the last three rounds of the Asian Formula Three Pacific Series at the Zhuhai International Circuit here.

Practice sessions set Friday morning were reset by organizers later in the afternoon on the request of officials of a nearby school where students were engrossed in their examinations.

It was a blessing in disguise for the 19-year-old Peña who showed up at the track early Friday weakened by a bum stomach.

"It's been a while, so we're still trying to get a feel of the car and the track," he said. "We're working on it. I'm confident we can improve more."

Driving a Dallara F304 for last year's AF3 team champion JA Motorsport, Peña clocked one minute and 37.5 seconds Thursday afternoon at the 4.1-kilometer track, just one-tenth of a second behind Henri Karjalainen of Finland and two-tenths of a second slower than Briton Dillon Battistini, the series leaders.

Former Promotions Class champion Moreno Soeprapto of Indonesia clocked 1:39.5 while Indonesian Robin Tato and Hong Kong's Paul Ip timed 1:40.

In his second practice run, Peña clocked 1:38.6, still the third best time, behind the 1:37.6 of Battistini and 1:37.4 of Karjalainen.

The three were the only drivers to try new tires in extremely hot conditions.

"He's doing well," said JA motorsport team chief Elson Carpio. "*Kailangan lang mag-adjust ng konti sa* driving, *medyo matagal din siyang nawala* (He needs to adjust a bit on his driving because he was away for too long)."

The race for pole position is on Saturday morning. Round 11 of the series will be held Saturday afternoon, with Rounds 12 and 13 set Sunday.

Former stars to join SEAG monitor group

By June Navarro

ATLANTA OLYMPICS SILVER MEDALIST Mansueto "Onyok" Velasco, Elma Muros-Posadas and Monsour del Rosario may be tapped to boost the training staff for this year's Southeast Asian Games campaign.

The three sports icons are high on the list of candidates for the monitoring committee of the SEAG Task Force that will keep an eye on the performance of the athletes as they prepare for the SEAG set later this year, according to Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr.

"We will tap former athletes who have done well in their respective sports," said Cojuangco. "We will put one former athlete for each sport but we can also assign two or three former athletes per discipline if the need arises."

The Philippines will compete in 40 of the 45 sports in the 11-nation meet set Dec. 6-16 in three venues in Thailand.

Lydia de Vega-Mercado was also hired as PSC consultant for athletics two years ago but the former Asian sprint queen had sought greener pastures in Singapore since then.

Shell NCR active chess starts today

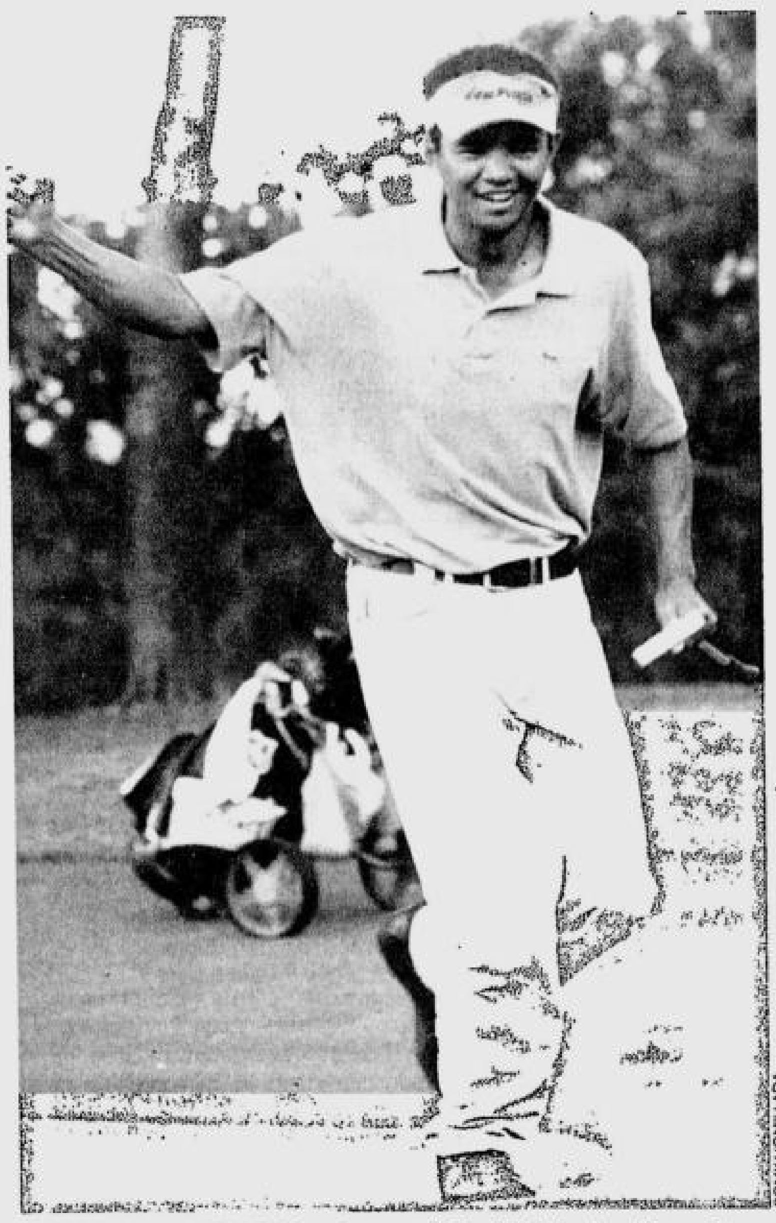
A FULL ROSTER OF 500 PLAYERS COMPETES for top honors in two divisions as the Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships kicks off its 2007 season with the staging of the NCR leg at SM City Manila today.

Reigning three-time Palarong Pambansa champion Jan Emmanuel Garcia heads the 20 years-and-under group, eager to show his stuff after reaching the knockout stage of the recent Shell Battle of Champs topped by International Master Wesley So.

Competition is also expected to be keen in the 14-years-old and below (kiddies) category.

The NCR tourney serves as the first leg of an eight-stage province-hopping series.

Tuguegarao will host the second leg on July 7-8, followed by Dagupan (July 21-22), Batangas (Aug. 4-5), Iloilo (Aug. 18-19), Cebu (Sept. 1-2), Davao (Sept.15-16) and Zamboanga (Sept. 29-30).



ROMY HOMILLADA

FINAL-ROUND SURGE: Mars Pucay nails his third win since November

Pucay sizzles with 67, wins by 5 over Casas

By Musong R. Castillo

LIPA CITY—KNOCKING APPROACHES CLOSE to the flag all day, Mars Pucay closed with a five-under-par 67 yesterday to coast to a five-stroke victory in the PGA Pantechs Invitational presented by Jun Bustamante at the Malarayat Golf and Country Club layout here.

Save for his only bogey on the sixth, Pucay was on target all day, sinking the longest of his six birdies from just 12 feet as he posted a four-round 272 tally for an easy win over Cassius Casas.

Casas, who started the day tied for the lead with Pucay and Richard Sinfuego, couldn't keep up with Pucay's birdie binge. He shot a level 72 for 277 in the event backed by JP Golf Korea, Electrobus, Callaway and Malarayat executives Mike Carr and Jack Imperial.

"I was just in-form the whole round—from tee to green," the 37-year-old Pucay said in Filipino. "I was hitting it pure and just got confident in the course of the (final) round."

His 16-under total after earlier rounds of 68, 68 and 69 gave Pucay his third win since November last year, when he won the Omega Invitational at Wack Wack. This one was worth P300,000 out of the pot put up by PGAP head Bustamante.

"Winning this way gives you a lot of confidence, especially since I will return to training immediately to prepare for the Johor (Malaysia) leg of the Asian Tour," said Pucay, who has several country exempts in the Asian Tour.

The only hiccup in Pucay's round came on the 220-yard par-3 sixth where he missed the green with a 5-wood and muffed a 10-footer for par.

Pucay was a par-ripping machine after that, sticking iron shots close to the pin almost the entire back nine where he picked up birdies on Nos. 11, 13, 14 and 16 to build a huge buffer.

Sinfuego, the heartbreak kid at the Royal Northwoods leg won by Elmer Salvador in come-from-behind style, struggled to a 74 and settled for a share of fourth at 279 with Artemio Murakami (70) and Antonio Lascuña (69).

Salvador's 71 put him in solo third, another shot behind former Casas at 278. Casas picked up P120,000 and Salvador P90,000.

Juvic Pagunsan, the 2006 Asian Tour Rookie of the Year, turned in a 71 and finished in a tie for seventh at 281 with unheralded Ibarra Quiachon.

Burger King, Dazz boost MVBA Invitational cast

By Jasmine W. Payo

GAMES TOMORROW
(New Cebu Coliseum)
3 p.m.— Opening Rites
3:30 p.m.— M. Lhuillier vs Dazz Sang Patak
5 :30 p.m.— Holcim Pryce Pharma-MisOr vs Burger King

TWO PBL TEAMS WILL SEE action in the First Talk 'N Text-Mindanao Visayas Basketball Association (MVBA) Invitational basketball tournament starting tomorrow at the New Cebu City Coliseum.

Burger King and Dazz 'Sang Patak, both led by standouts from the Visayas and Mindanao, will mix it up with four other teams in the first major provincial event sanctioned by the Samahang Basketbol ng Pilipinas.

Both squads tapped reinforcements from other teams in the PBL, which recently crowned Harbour Centre as its third straight champion.

MVBA first conference champion Holcim Pryce Pharma-MisOr, Iligan Archangels, host M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala-Cebu City and collegiate powerhouse University of Visayas complete the field in the five-day tournament.

Dazz will take on M. Lhuillier Kwarta Padala in the opening game at 3:30 p.m., right after the 3 p.m. kickoff ceremony. Holcim Pryce Pharma-MisOr and Burger King will battle at 5:30 p.m.

The Whoppers now boast of a formidable frontline as JR Quiñahan, the burly Cebuano slotman, teams up with Toyota Balintawak's 6-foot-7 Fil-Am Joe Devance, whose mother, Mae, traces her roots to Negros Occidental.

The Kitchen Specialists, whose players are mostly from the South, will field three Harbour players led by Zamboanga's Chico Lanete, a two-time Finals MVP.

Dazz is mentored by Visayan coach Jun Noel while Lawrence Chongson will call the shots for the Whoppers, who reached the quarterfinals of the last PBL conference.

The six teams will be divided into two groups and play a single round. The top two teams in each group will advance to the June 27 crossover semifinals, with the winners clashing for the championship the following day.

Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Sealed applications for eligibility and bid documents for the supply and delivery of Application Form for Registration for use in the registration of voters for the Sangguniang Kabataan scheduled on July 15-22, 2007, shall be received at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th floor, Palacio del Gobernador, Intramuros, Manila, June 29, 2007 at 10:00 AM at which place, date and time, said sealed bids shall be opened in the presence of the members of the Bids and Awards Committee, representatives of the Commission on Elections, Commission on Audit, Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting, the participating bidders and the public, with an approved budget of Seven Million Pesos (Php 7,000,000.00) charged against the appropriation of the National and Local Elections 2007 subject to adjustment upon release of SK Registration funds.

A pre-bid conference shall be held on June 26, 2007, at 10:00 AM, at the Comelec Session Hall, 8th floor, Palacio del Gobernardor, Intramuros, Manila.

Bid documents and specifications may be obtained during regular office hours, beginning June 23, 2007 from the Property Division upon payment at the Cash Division, Commission on Elections, of a non-refundable amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php 2,500).

Bids shall be accompanied by a Bid Security equivalent to one per centum (1%) of the approved budget for the contract to be bid, in the form of cash or Manager's / Cashier's check payable to the "Commission on Elections".

Full delivery of the registration form shall be on July 5, 2007.

The COMELEC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any formal defect contained therein, and accept the lowest complying responsive bid that is most advantageous to the Commission. Likewise, it reserves the right to review the qualifications of the bidders after the bidding and before the contract is executed. Should such review uncover any change in the situation of the bidder to materially downgrade the substance of such statements, the COMELEC shall disqualify the bidder upon due notice without any obligation whatsoever on the part of the COMELEC for any expense or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of its bid.

June 21, 2007.

(Sgd.) JOSE M. TOLENTINO, JR.
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – June 23, 2007)

Abdon provides lone . . .

From page A23

force a sudden-death playoff with Lin at 289, then birdied the third playoff hole to end the suspense.

Malaysia took second place in the boys' team race, six shots behind the Thais' 1154 total. Singapore finished eight shots back.

The Philippines improved on its finish last year by a notch following a fourth-place effort of 1184. Indonesia (1193) and Brunei (1258) wound up fifth and sixth, respectively.

DE GUZMAN: 4th

The RP girls' team, third last year, could only finish fourth (914) behind Thailand (871), Singapore (883) and Malaysia (907). Indonesia also had 914 but was declared fifth after a countback.

With parents Ryan and Emmy following him, Abdon decided the issue early with a string of three birdies from the sixth. He added three more birdies on the 11th, 15th and 16th.

But the turning point proved the par-3 12th, where he hit into the bunker while his flightmates—Yung, Thai Sittiporn Wattanapulsab and Singaporean Woo Ke-Jun—all found the green.

"I said to myself then that if I could save par I could wrap this up," said the Junior World-bound Abdon, who blasted to within four feet, then made the putt.

Sittiporn went on to shoot a 69 and salvaged third place at 286 over compatriot Pathomporn Sungnark, who closed with a 67 for 287.

Joey Huerva IV, the only other Filipino who played decently and was in contention for third place, ballooned to a 78 and finished ninth at 293.

Jan Michael Yee wound up at 299 while RP teammates Joel Pauig and Jonar Austria finished at 324 and 326, respectively.

The RP girls' team was never in contention with Regina de Guzman getting little support.

De Guzman finished in a tie for fourth at 295 but Irina Paulin Gabasa wound up 12th at 305. Sunshine Baraquiel and Katya Margarita dela Cruz were among the tailenders.

San Mig Drag Racing fifth leg under way

SOME 100 DRIVERS TRY TO BEAT THE RECORD time and boost their title bids as the 2007 San Mig Coffee Drag Racing Championship stages its fifth and penultimate leg today at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Vanni Garcia of W. Autosport Vannitec and Sonny de Torres of Group N-Matonetics hope to catch up with leader Jonathan Tiu of Team Ere as they gun for wins in their respective divisions.

Garcia and De Torres have 25 points each, 15 behind Tiu, who owns the record 10.287 seconds.

An intense showdown between Tiu and Garcia is expected after they finished 1-2 in the second leg of the Quick 8 division last March while riding Mitsubishi Evo 5s.

They will be challenged by Ryan Lee of Speedworks, Matonetics' Ryan Lee and chief tuner Mato Tan who is currently third overall.

De Torres, the champion of the very first Drag Racing Invitational, also leads the Pro division.

'Legends' stint for P1-M poker champion

THE CHAMPION OF THE THIRD MILLION-PESO Hold'Em Championship gets a chance to take part in the prestigious "Legends of Poker" tournament at the Bike Casino in Los Angeles in August if he chooses to avail himself of an all expense-paid vacation to the United States instead of the P1 million cash prize.

PPT chair and CEO Reynaldo Gamboa announced this recently as PPT presses its goal of producing a Filipino world poker champ. Gamboa made the arrangement with Bike Casino.

Meanwhile, poker players based in Central Luzon will get their final chance to earn seats to the national finals when Casino Filipino Angeles hosts a satellite tournament this Sunday. Registration starts at 1 p.m.

Satellite winners earn seats to the grand finals worth P33,000 in tournament and registration fees.

SPORTSWATCH

DOT-NCR Inv'l golf July 12

THE DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM-NATIONAL Capital Region and Outstanding Pilipino Movement have joined forces to organize the 1st DOT-NCR invitational golf tournament with the cooperation of the Philippine Tourism Authority. Called "The Secretary's Cup," the 18-hole event will be held at 9 a.m. on July 12 at the Club Intramuros course along Bonifacio Drive in Intramuros, Manila. The event aims to promote awareness on Metropolitan Manila as a major tourist destination with a wide range of world-class interests. It also aims to promote Manila as a venue where Asian golfers can converge and appreciate golfing in a fashionable environment of greens while living in style in the heart of the Metropolis.

Makati 4-cock derby today

THE FIERY SHOWDOWN OF LEADING gamecock enthusiasts resumes today at Makati Coliseum via a special 4-cock derby that will feature 70 fights beginning at 5 p.m. The WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp. and Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) will host this event, the first of two special cockfests. The second derby (4-cock) unfolds on June 27.

4 cockers top SJC Int'l Derby

FOUR PARTICIPANTS EMERGED CO-CHAMPIONS in the recent second leg of the SJC International 8-cock derby at San Juan Coliseum after tallying seven wins and one loss each. The winners—*sabong* idol Patrick Antonio and partner Joe Sanford of California, Kabu Taniguchi of Japan, Arman Santos of Laguna and Super Pacman Complexor entry—recieved their trophies and prizes the other day.

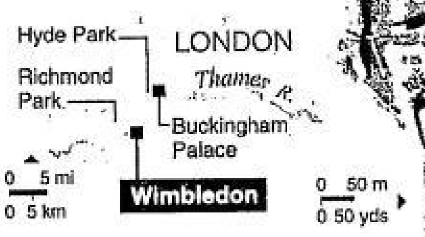
LPC tilt features 50 fights

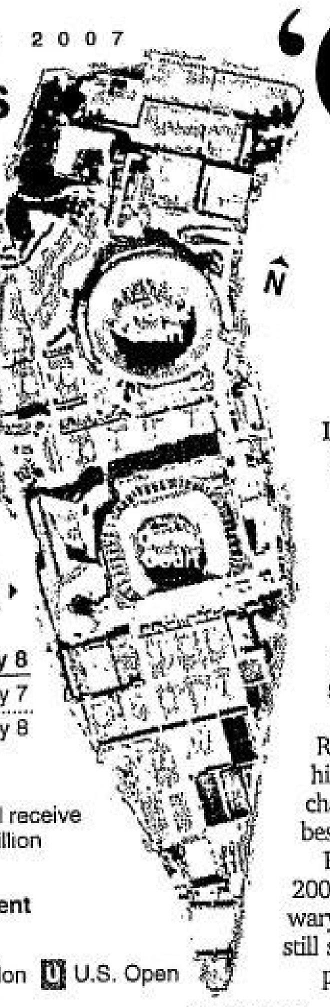
FIFTY EXCITING MATCHES WILL SPICE UP THE showdown of gamecock aficionados from Parañaque, Muntinlupa, Pasay, Las Pinas and Cavite in today's Fastest Win One-Cock Ulutan at Las Piñas Coliseum. Fights start at 8 a.m., according to coliseum manager Alex Tobias. The fastest win champion will receive P10,000 while the overall winner gets P15,000; Hosts Howard and Atet Molina pegged the entry fee at P1,100.

WIMBLEDON 2007

Splendor on the grass

Defending champion Roger Federer aims for his fifth-consecutive Wimbledon title, while Justine Henin looks for her first championship at the All England Club. Both players are No. 1 seeds at the grass-court Grand Slam beginning Monday.





Wimbledon	June 25-July 8
Women's singles final	Saturday, July 7
Men's singles final	Sunday, July 8

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For the first time, men and women will receive equal prize money. **Winner $1.4 million**

Top seeded players in the tournament

Grand Slam titles

A Australian **F** French **W** Wimbledon **U** U.S. Open

MEN	A	F	W	U
1. Roger Federer 25 • Switzerland Won 48 matches in a row on grass; longest streak on that surface in the Open era, which began in 1968	3	0	4	3
2. Rafael Nadal 21 • Spain Beat Federer in the 2007 French Open final for his third straight at Roland Garros	0	3	0	0
3. Andy Roddick 24 • United States Glad to be back on grass after another first-round exit at the French Open	0	0	0	1

WOMEN	A	F	W	U
1. Justine Henin 25 • Belgium For third straight year, arrives at Wimbledon trying to complete career Grand Slam	1	4	0	1
2. Maria Sharapova 20 • Russia Semifinalist or better at nine of her previous 12 majors, including two titles	0	0	1	1
3. Jelena Jankovic 22 • Serbia Tied with Henin for most titles on the tour this season	0	0	0	0

SOURCES: Wimbledon; Space Imaging

AP

'Gang of Three'

Nadal, Roddick, Hewitt eyed as Federer rule challengers

LONDON—ANDY RODDICK, LLEYTON Hewitt and Rafael Nadal are being tipped as the only players who can prevent Roger Federer from claiming a fifth successive Wimbledon title.

Just as Nadal has provéd unbeatable on the red clay of Paris, so has Federer been equally dominant on the grass of the All England Club where he is on a 28-match winning streak.

Many in the game believe that of the three, Roddick, with a fourth Queen's Club title under his belt and with former double Wimbledon champion Jimmy Connors in his corner, has the best opportunity.

But the American, runner-up to Federer in 2004 and 2005 and losing semifinalist in 2003, is wary of the threat posed by the world No. 1 who is still smarting from his latest Roland Garros disappointment.

"He's been in the final of one Grand Slam this year and won the other one without dropping a set. If that makes someone less of a player, I'd like to know where to sign up for that," said thé world No. 3.

Roddick is right to be cautious; his career record against Federer reads 13 defeats and just one win.

US Davis Cup captain Patrick McEnroe believes Roddick will be especially motivated by having been knocked out in the third round by Andy Murray last year.

"He's aware his best time of the year is coming up. I think you have to put him in as a solid No. 3, behind Nadal, who's just slightly ahead, based on confidence level. I believe this is Andy's best chance to win a Slam," McEnroe told ESPN.

Fellow American Jim Courier, a four-time Grand Slam title winner, also thinks Roddick has a hope if he can take the game to Federer.

"First, you have to hope for him (Federer) to have an off day," Courier told Fox Sports. "On faster surfaces, if you can take the racket away from him and make it so he can't be creative, you have a chance. You need to blast winners, play high-risk tennis and overpower him."

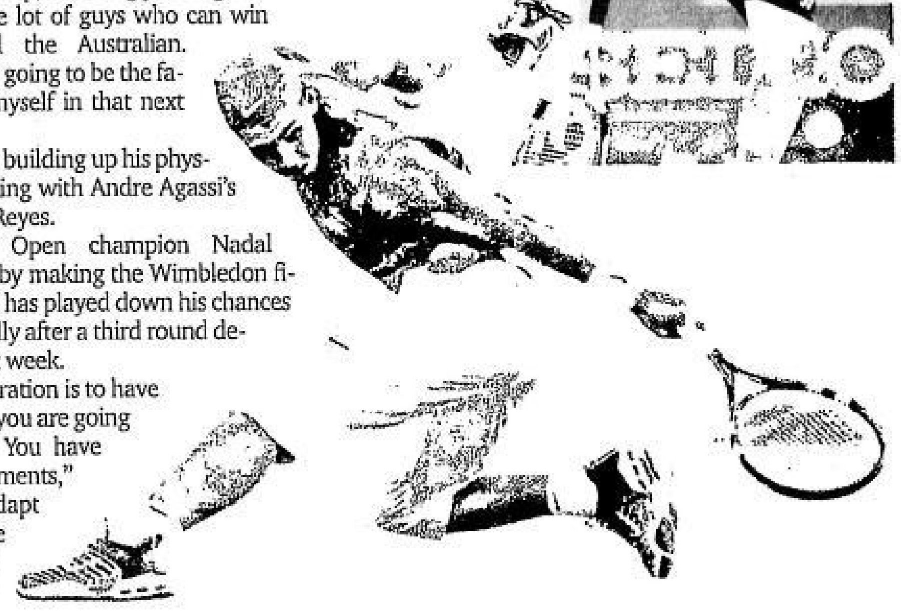
Hewitt, the 2002 champion, can boast a better record against Federer—seven wins against 11 defeats—but his last victory was a marathon five-set triumph in the Davis Cup, four long years ago.

"There's a whole lot of guys who can win Wimbledon," said the Australian. "Obviously, Roger's going to be the favorite, and I put myself in that next category."

Hewitt has been building up his physical strength, working with Andre Agassi's former trainer Gil Reyes.

Triple French Open champion Nadal stunned everyone by making the Wimbledon final in 2006, but he has played down his chances of a repeat especially after a third round defeat at Queen's last week.

"The best preparation is to have the same as when you are going to the US Open. You have three, four tournaments," said Nadal. "To adapt to grass in one week is always difficult." *AFP*



FROM top to bottom: The top three players who have the strongest chances of derailing Roger Federer's date with destiny are Andy Roddick, Lleyton Hewitt and Rafael Nadal

Hatton out to keep card clean vs Castillo

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—UNDEFEATED English fighter Ricky Hatton expects to be in the best form of his career here Saturday for his 12-round light welterweight showdown with Mexico's Jose Luis Castillo.

Hatton, 42-0 with 32 knockouts, has been excited about the bout against the two-time lightweight champion since it was announced and is confident of victory over Castillo, 55-7 with one draw and 47 knockouts.

"When you fight someone who has done what he has, you get a little more spring in your step," Hatton said.

"That just shows by the way I have performed in training camp. It's the best I've ever been by a country mile and it's because of the man I've got in front of me."

The 28-year-old former super lightweight champion from Manchester was unsatisfied with his form in his past two triumphs and wants to stage an impressive show for American fans.

"Perhaps without realizing it I got a bit complacent," Hatton said. "But because I am fighting the guy who I am fighting, I think without realizing it I will find a bit extra. I've been walking around snarling for two weeks and I didn't have that for my last two fights." *AFP*

Thaksin promises Manchester City roster changes

LONDON—FORMER THAI PREMIER Thaksin Shinawatra promised on Thursday to buy players for Manchester City if he succeeded in his takeover bid and said he had recently met former England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson.

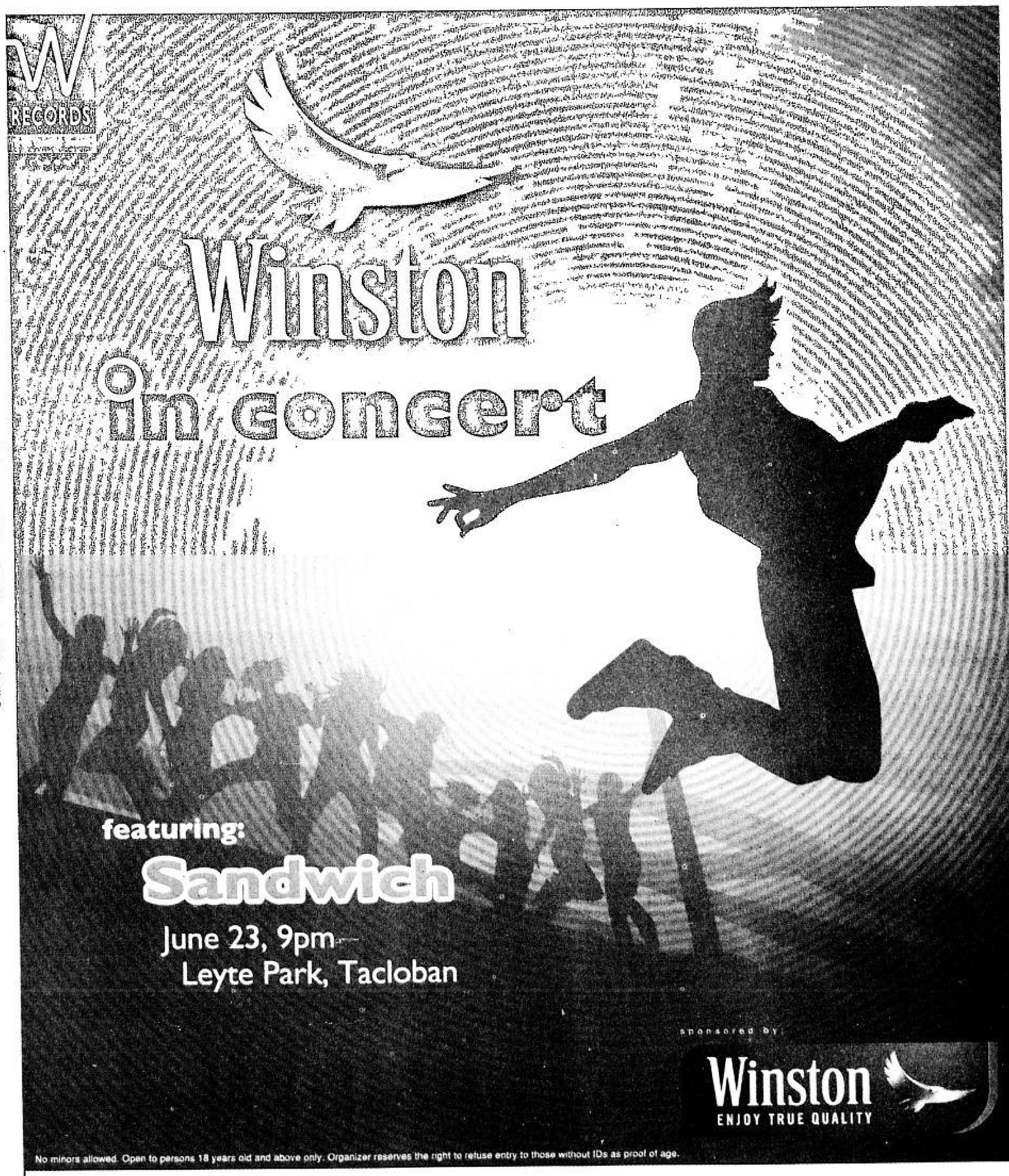
Thaksin, who was ousted last September, has tabled a $162.6-million takeover bid for the Premier League club with the backing of its board.

The former telecommunications tycoon said he wanted to develop City as a club, especially its profile in Asia, and dismissed a misconduct charge laid against him by Thai prosecutors on Thursday as being "politically motivated."

"What I'm going to bring to the club is fresh ideas from outside, equity and capital, so the club can invest more on players and other infrastructure if necessary," Thaksin told Sky Sports News.

"The existing players are very good but we will have to bring more, good players. We need to add two more strikers, two more midfielders and then maybe some."

Although $1.5 billion in Shinawatra family bank accounts were frozen last week by the Thai authorities, he said he had the money to complete the deal as "funds have been allocated long before. This has been prepared for several months." *AFP*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SPORTS

Cojuangco favors local training for athletes

By June Navarro

CONTRARY TO THE WISHES OF THE government agency Philippine Sports Commission, the Philippine Olympic Committee favors local training for athletes bound for overseas competitions.

While the PSC wants overseas training for potential medalists, the local Olympic body is keen on monitoring the progress of the athletes at home.

"It is cheaper to train the athletes here than send them abroad," said POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco Jr. yesterday.

Aside from the prohibitive cost that entails foreign training, the POC chief said he is not happy with the way the athletes are being treated in training facilities overseas.

Cojuangco noted that the training centers in China, for instance, are too strict that sometimes the athletes tend to lose their confidence when actual competition comes.

"Athletes are not only quartered in those facilities, they are literally jailed throughout the duration of the training program," the former Tarlac congressman said. "The training of the athletes should be done here."

Along with their respective local coaches, at least 15 athletes from diving, wushu, weightlifting and gymnastics are scheduled to leave for Guangzhou City, China, on June 28 for a long-term training program geared toward winning the Philippines' first Olympic gold in the 2008 Beijing Games.

The PSC, which coordinated with the Chinese Sports Ministry, will bankroll the training of the athletes with the blessing of President Macapagal-Arroyo's husband, Mike, through his foundation.

"I don't believe in suppressing the athletes *baka humina ang loob sa labanan* (lest they turn soft during competition). They should be there willingly," said Cojuangco. "We should have regimented training but not to the point of forcing them."

Cojuangco suggested that athletes should have a day off each week to free their minds of the pressures of training for multi-event competitions such as the Southeast Asian Games, Asian Games and the Olympics.

The 721 candidate-athletes for the SEAG, set Dec. 6-16 in Thailand, will stay in training facilities closely monitored by the joint PSC-POC task force. The task force will trim down the list on Oct. 8.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

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Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

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EXCELLENT HAPPY TRADING CORPORATION G/F Legaspi Tower, 300 P. Ocampo St., Malate, Manila	Bong Cheol Kim	General Manager
NEW COAST HOTEL, INC. 1588 Pedro Gil cor. M.H. del Pilar, Malate, Manila	Lei Yan	Outlet Manager (Chinese Restaurant)
NO. 1 ACTIVITY NETWORK SYSTEM (NANS), INC. Unit 22pc Eisenhower Condominium, # 7 Eisenhower St., San Juan, M.M.	Juyoung Song (wife of HAN)	Exec. Secretary
EPOCHINA MINING CORP. No. 7 Molave St., Narra Gate, Forbes Park, Makati City	Zhongyi An	Manager
ITALIAN-THAI DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC COMPANY LIMITED Unit 1408, 14/F, East Tower, PSE Center, Pasig City	Piti Tangkittiwutthikul	Programmer
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FFCCCII 6/F Federation Center, Muelle de Binondo St., Binondo, Manila	Yuan Song	Teacher
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PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK 2/F PNB Financial Center, D. Macapagal Blvd., Pasay City	Vikas Shukla	Technical Consultant
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The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

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Customs cracks down on fake tax credits

Agency still optimistic about meeting targets

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS SAID IT HAS STARTED cracking down on traders who make fraudulent claims of export-related tax credits, noting it was one of the huge sources of revenue leakages for the government.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales told reporters that his office has received reports that some traders were declaring to be exporting goods, but that the containers supposedly carrying the merchandise for export were actually empty.

Businesses situated in economic zone or those who operate a bonded warehouse are exempted from paying import duties if the imported goods will be transformed into finished products for exports. If, after a prescribed period, the raw materials were not made into goods for exports, then the traders will have to pay the corresponding duties to the BOC.

Morales said some traders were faking export reports, such as by loading empty containers to carriers, so that they would not have to pay duties.

The BOC chief said the amount of potential revenues lost were still undetermined, but that his office believed it was significant.

Previously, Morales said, the BOC only manually inspected containers for exports. Due the tedious process, not all containers were being inspected, allowing some fraudulent claims of exports to go unnoticed.

Morales said that Customs officials were only allowed to open export containers and destroy the packaging of goods in the presence of the owners.

To simplify the process of inspection and to address revenue leakages arising from false claims of exports, the BOC has installed X-ray machines in various ports nationwide.

"The installation of X-ray machines is one of the measures we have undertaken to address shortfalls in revenue collection. We commit to still meeting our full-year collection target," Morales said.

In the first quarter, the BOC collected only P40.2 billion, P6.7-billion short of its P46.9-billion target. The BOC is the second-biggest revenue source of the national government after the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

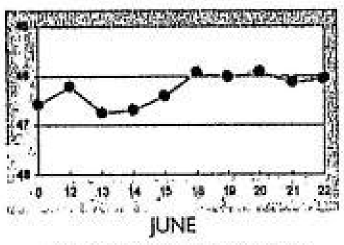
In January to May, the BOC collected P105.3 billion in duties and taxes. This meant that the BOC still needed to collect P30.3 billion in June alone to meet its first-half goal of P105.3 billion.

"The adoption of measures like tightening of inspection will address the shortfall as far as the BOC is concerned," Morales said.

"I still believe that by the end of the year, the BOC will be able to hit its target," he added. For 2007, the BOC has been tasked by the national government to collect P228 billion in duties and taxes on imports.

The target is in line with the government's aim of further reducing the budget deficit from P64.8 billion last year to only P63 billion this year.

INDICATORS



JUNE

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P46.06 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 22, 2007

STOCK MARKET

Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.36-PERCENT LOWER yesterday as investors took profits on bluechips, offsetting gains in the broader market, dealers said.

They said the composite index hit a fresh record high early in the session but investors later changed their minds and sold in the face of a lack of fresh leads.

It finished 13.43 points down at 3,701.16 after hitting a new trading high of 3,730.26. It hit a low of 3,687 points.

However, the all-share index edged up 0.72 points to 2,375.71.

Turnover reached 14.3 billion shares worth P19.4 billion.

The large turnover was boosted by block transactions involving shares of low-cost housing developer CP Homes worth P12 bil-

SHARES/ B4

Japan firms complete Mirant purchase

By Abigail L. Ho

THE CONSORTIUM OF TOKYO ELECTric Power Co. (Tepco) and Marubeni Corp. has successfully completed its acquisition of Atlanta-based Mirant Corp.'s major power assets in the Philippines, paving the way for the entry of the newly formed TeaM Energy Corp. in the local power market.

Tepco and Marubeni put up CrimsonPower Holdings Co. Inc. to acquire all shares of Mirant Asia Pacific Ltd. (MAPL), the holding company of Mirant Philippines.

Following the post-closing reorganization, TeaM will become a project company committed to continue providing stable power supply to the country through long-term electricity purchase and fuel supply contracts with the state-owned National Power Corp.

According to the newly formed company, it will provide around 20 percent of the total generating capac-

JAPAN/ B4

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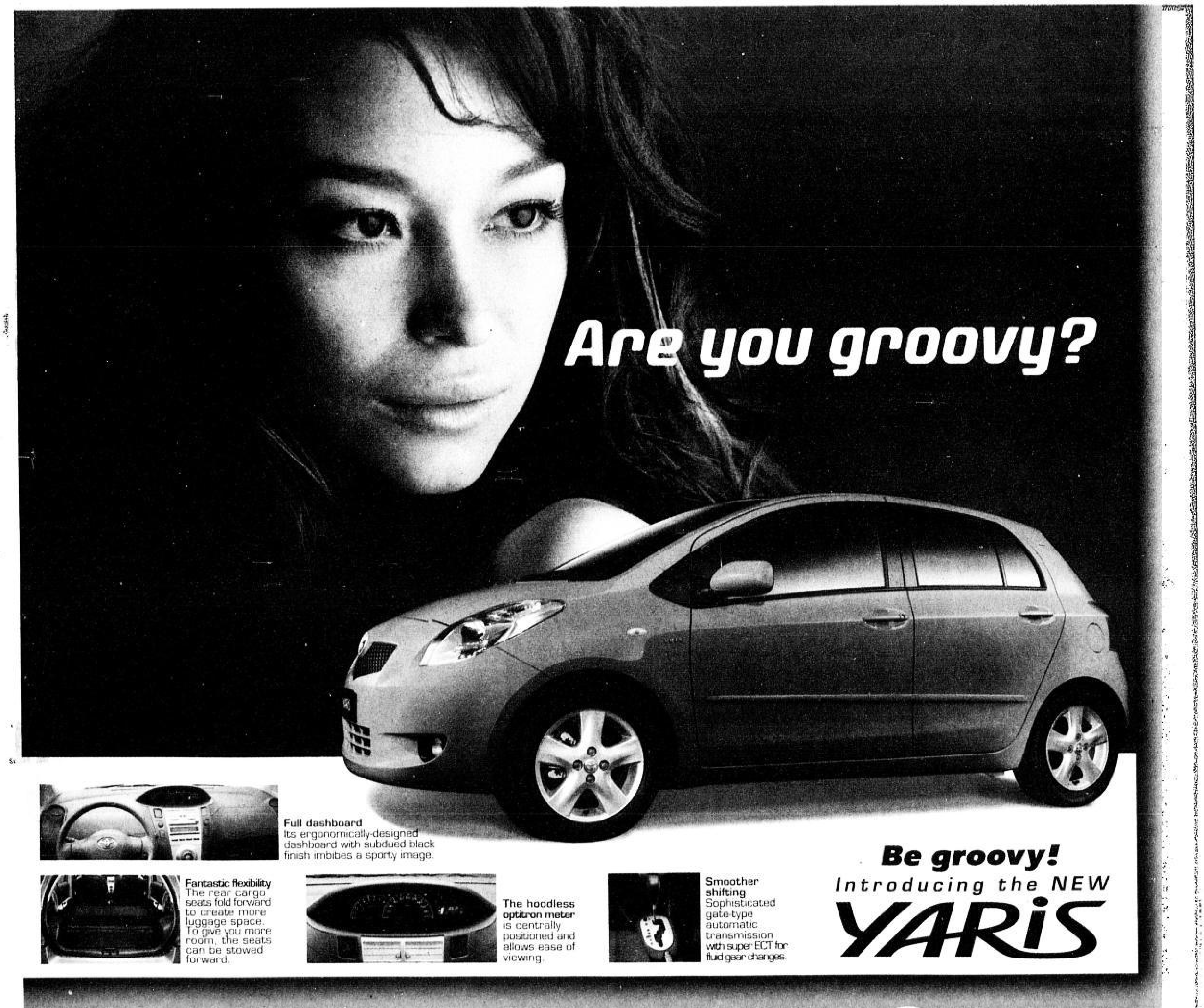
NFA cuts rice imports for 2007 /B8



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CLINICAL STUDY MADE EASY

Abbott opens medical library to online researchers

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

A MEDICAL DOCTOR NEVER REALLY STOPS studying.

After passing the board exams and going through the rigorous residency and fellowship programs, they still have to constantly read up on the latest medical developments to help them properly care for their patients.

It's not only diseases that evolve, but also the types of medicinal treatment available in the market.

This is why pharmaceutical company Abbott International has taken it upon itself to put up an e-library, to share its vast resource of international medical journals and clinical studies with the medical community.

Abbott is a multinational company that markets weight loss medicine Reductil, anti-anemia drug Iberet, supplements Gain Plus, Ensure, Pediasure and Glucerna for diabetes.

The Abbott e-library is a free online medical research service launched last month available to an initial group of 350 doctors, hospital directors, academicians, training offers and Abbott's advisory board members.

The doctors can tap the Abbott e-library by visiting the website and keying in their requests.

These are then processed by a receptionist and full-time librarian who are committed to send the results within two days.

Through the library, doctors can, for example, ask for the latest research abroad on an ordinary medical condition such as pneumonia and the top 50 articles will be sent through e-mail.

Dr. Antonio Ligsay, medical and training manager of Abbott, told the INQUIRER in an interview that Abbott saw it fit to open an e-library because it has a collection of journals and research that are only accessible to a few.

International medical journals are also often too costly for doctors because of the limited circulation. And although there are a number of medical studies online, only the abstracts are available to the physicians.

By sharing Abbott's own wealth of material with the medical community, Abbott hopes to contribute to the further skills development of Philippine doctors.

"The Abbott e-library will be a valuable tool to physicians since it will provide information that can update their knowledge and skills and advance our healthcare system," Ligsay said.

The idea is to give the time-pressed doctors, academicians and hospital managers the access to the latest discoveries in the field of medicine at their convenience since it is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

For more specialized material, especially on rare diseases, the e-library can also be tapped to look for material outside Abbott's library.

Ligsay said the e-library is currently limited to international journals, but added that there are plans to expand the library to include local research.

"Residents and fellows do research as part of their requirements," Ligsay said. "Not all of them can be published in international journals but the e-library can be the repository of that valuable research."

He related how his own research on a medical condition in Mindanao helped a colleague who was facing a similar condition in Manila.

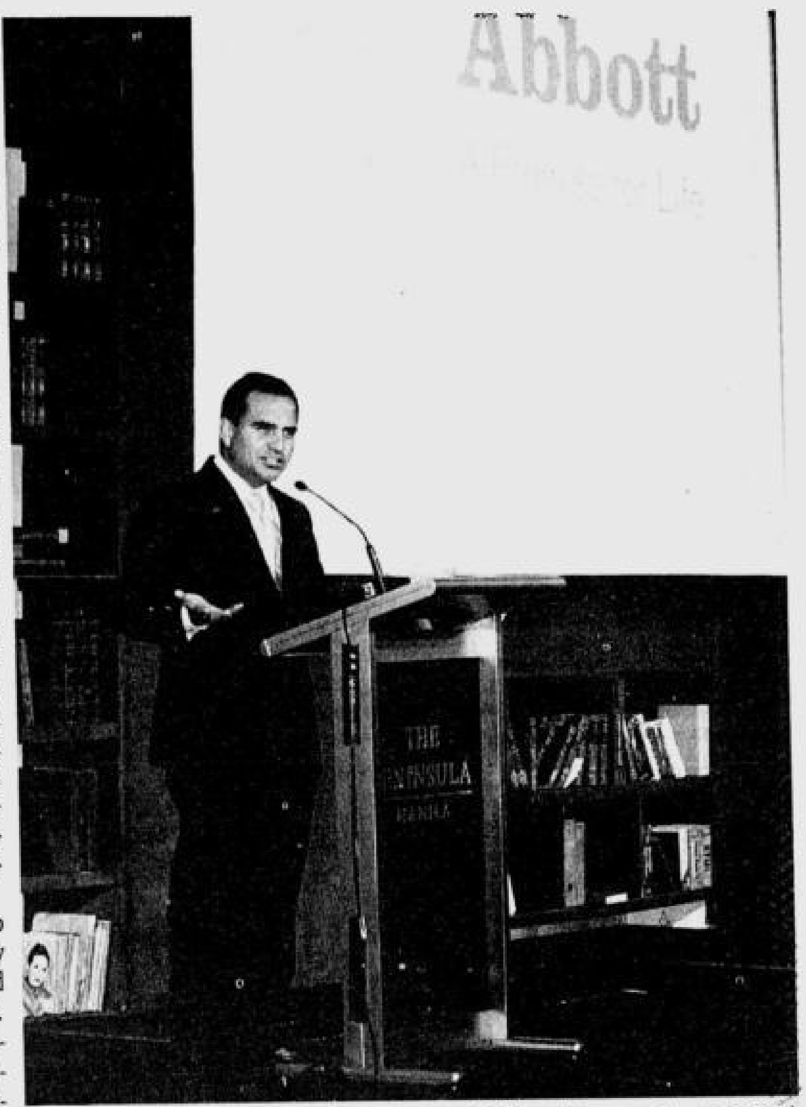
Ligsay said such sharing of valuable information would be made possible through the library, which he said would be expanded as it becomes more valuable to the doctors.

From just 350 doctors and academicians, the Abbott e-library would soon be opened to more doctors wanting to update their skills and knowledge.

"We have been open for about a month and we are already getting about eight to 10 research requests a day, which can still be handled by our librarian," he said. "If we get more requests, then we will have to get more people."

The launch of the e-library is part of the celebration of Abbott's 70th year of doing business in the Philippines.

Aside from the e-library, Abbott likewise sponsored a mobile health screening program covering hospitals, institutions and communities.



ROBERTO Taboada, general manager of Abbott International explains the benefits of the e-library.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

YOUNG BLOOD 3
edited by JORGE V. ARUTA
RUEL S. DE VERA

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NTC reassigns frequencies to expand wireless access

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS Commission will take away certain frequency bands from broadcast stations and assign these to wireless service providers, the regulator said yesterday.

This will be the second time the NTC reallocates radio frequency bands in favor of wireless access, which is seen as a suitable technology for promoting over-the-air voice calls and Internet access, especially in remote areas.

NTC said it has solicited public opinion on the matter and learned that there is much more demand for broadband and wireless Internet than for other uses, "necessitating the reallocation of additional frequency bands," the regulator said in a draft memorandum circular.

In response to demand, NTC is set to reallocate 410-430 MHz band for broadband wireless access in addition to the frequency bands already reallocated and shall form part of the National Radio Frequency Allocation Table.

In August 2005, the NTC reallocated the bands 450-470 megahertz (MHz), 1900-1910 MHz, 1980-1990 MHz, 2400-2483 MHz, 2500-2700 MHz, 3400-3600 MHz, 5150-5350 MHz, 5470-5850 MHz and 10150-10650 MHz.

NTC said this will ensure a ready supply for wireless Internet providers when the need arises.

The commission also said it will suspend new or additional applications for radio frequencies until the reallocation process is completed and the affected broadcast stations are assigned new frequencies.

As for legacy users to be affected by the reallocation, NTC said it will assign the 406-410 MHz and 440-450 MHz bands for them.

Once carriers get the new frequencies, they can use any technology they want to offer wireless Internet connection to customers, NTC said.

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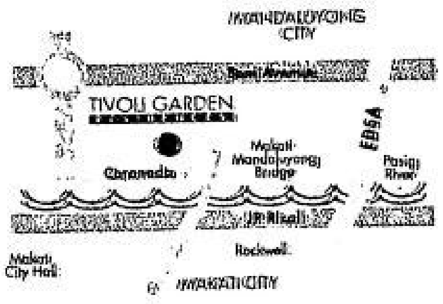

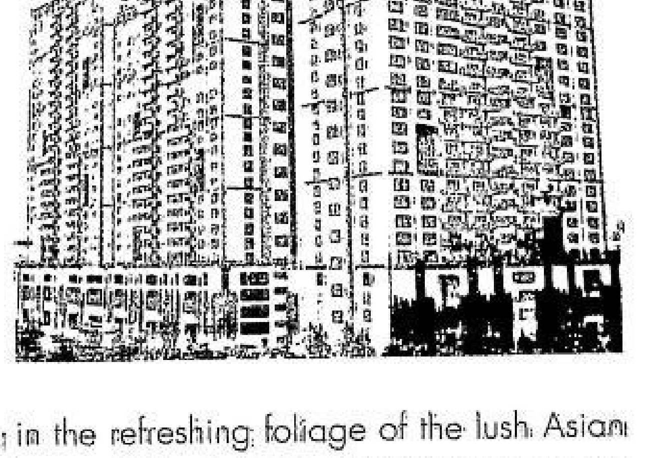

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For Announcement Purposes Only

China Bank acquires 87.5% equity stake in Manila Bank

Says merger to boost expansion plan

CHINA BANKING CORP. IS ACQUIRING the majority shares owned by the Puyat block in Manila Bank.

The Puyat family—founders and majority owners of Manila Bank—and top officials of China Bank signed last June 21 a Memorandum of Agreement on the purchase of 87.51 percent of Manila Bank's subscribed shares. The deal is subject to approval by the Monetary Board and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, China Bank said the final purchase price would be set after a 30-day due-diligence audit it would conduct after the MOA signing.

The resulting merger will boost China Bank's network of 155 branches by 75 branches from Manila Bank. This is on top of the ongoing three-year branch expansion program of China Bank. Of the 75 Manila Bank branch licenses—of which 27 are operating—41 are in Metro Manila while 34 are in provincial areas. Manila Bank was reopened as a savings bank in June 1999. As of December 2006, its total assets stood at P10.2 billion, loans at P4.4 billion and deposits at P5.2 billion.

At the signing ceremony, Manila Bank chair Luis Puyat noted that the rapidly changing landscape of the Philippine banking industry has made it tougher for smaller banks to compete.

"It was a difficult decision for the family to let go a business we have painstakingly built over the years. In looking for a partner, we were attracted by China Bank's industry-best capital strength, financial stability, loyal customers and sustained profitability. We are gratified that Manila Bank will become a crucial part of China Bank's plans to become a strong major player in the industry," Puyat said.

China Bank vice chair Hans T. Sy said the deal was a strong recognition of the inherent strengths of China Bank and "the strong future that this combination of resources would mean for our combined client base."

China Bank president and CEO Peter S. Dee said the bank's three-year business plan called for an aggressive expansion of its distribution network, together with substantial growth in assets and loan portfolio.

"This acquisition will boost our branch network substantially to over 250 branches, including the expansion program we already started even before this deal. With a bigger footprint and network through which we can sell and distribute our full range of products and services, we are now in a better position to compete more effectively with the bigger competitors in the banking industry," he added.

China Bank's 2006 net income performance of P3.54 billion represented a return on stockholders equity of 15.93 percent and a return on assets of 2.47 percent. The bank's capital adequacy ratio of 28.35 percent adjusted for credit risk (23.68 percent adjusted for both credit and market risk) continues to be among the highest in the industry.

Senate to probe SSS sale of SMC shares

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PIMENTEL

THE SENATE WILL SUMMON Social Security System (SSS) Administrator Corazon dela Paz to shed more light on the "questionable" sale of the state-run pension fund's shares in San Miguel Corp. (SMC) last week.

In a phone interview with the INQUIRER, Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said that Dela Paz should explain the terms of the sale worth P14 billion and the buyer of the shares amid reports that only P2 billion of the sale price had been actually paid.

"My informant tells me the sale had been consummated way back in September 2006. We want to know why the SSS had transferred the shares to the unknown buyer even though it has yet to get the balance of P12 billion," Pimentel said. "We also want to know who is the favored buyer."

San Miguel disclosed over the weekend the sale of 176.128 million shares or roughly 5 percent of the beer and food conglomerate.

Dela Paz, who is out of the country, has yet to declare whether the SSS was the seller. Market analysts said that the SSS sold the shares to SMC Retirement Plan, which had been used by the management led by SMC president Ramon Ang to acquire shares in the company.

Assistant vice president for media affairs Joel Palacios said that the SSS was not compelled to disclose the buyer nor the terms of the sale to the public. Palacios said Dela Paz would answer all queries once she arrives from her trip abroad.

Pimentel stressed that it was in the public's interest for Dela Paz to reveal the terms of the deal in order to allow its millions of members to determine whether the shares were sold at the right price.

Pimentel said that it was unusual for the SSS or any corporation to transfer ownership of an asset even before it obtained the full payment. "The sale was made under friendly terms and we have to know who was the beneficiary of these friendly terms," said Pimentel.

The 14th Congress is set to open July 23.

The SSS' sale of its SMC shares came just two months after another state-run pension fund, the Government Services Insurance System, sold its 7-percent stake in San Miguel for roughly P14 billion.

Basic Petroleum to go into ethanol production

By Daxim L. Lucas

LISTED FIRM BASIC PETROLEUM CORP. plans to venture into so-called "green energy" production with its purchase of Zambo Norte BioEnergy Corp. (ZNBC), a firm that has the potential to produce up to 200,000 liters of ethanol fuel a day from sugar cane by late 2009.

In a statement, Basic Petroleum executive vice president and chief operating officer Oscar de Venecia Jr. said his firm's buyout of ZNBC would put it at the forefront of the country's biofuels industry in the Philippines.

The proposed acquisition would be submitted for shareholder approval at the annual stockholders' meeting next month of the company, which has traditionally been associated with oil and gas exploration.

With its foray into green energy, Basic Petroleum intends to rename its holding company as Basic Energy Corp., with ZNBC and Basic Petroleum as subsidiaries.

"We will continue to pursue oil and gas exploration as we diversify our energy businesses in view of significant global trends," De Venecia said.

ZNBC's assets include a 22-hectare site for its proposed plant and more than 6,000 hectares of leased land in Zamboanga del Norte, which will be planted with sugarcane.

To assure sustained feedstock supply, Basic has earmarked an additional 4,000 hectares also in Zamboanga del Norte for the project. A total of 10,000 hectares will be dedicated for the use of the proposed ethanol plant fueled by sugarcane.

De Venecia said that the facility anticipated the increased demand for ethanol as a result of the enactment of the Biofuel Energy Act of 2006 signed in January 2007 as Republic Act 9367.

The law mandates 5-percent bioethanol blending into gasoline by May 2009, a development which will require an estimated 300 million liters a year. By 2011, the 10-percent blending mandated by law will require 600 million liters a year.

Shares close lower

From page B1

lion, ahead of the stock's delisting on Monday.

There were 62 advancers and 56 decliners, while 55 stocks were unchanged.

"The recent record-breaking run has produced handsome gains for a lot of issues in the market and now we're seeing a correction," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

"However, investors in general are still very optimistic that the market will continue to test new record levels," he added. *AFP*

Japan firms . . .

From page B1

ity in Luzon.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said the Department of Energy had "high expectations of Tepco and Marubeni, considering that this is a partnership between internationally reputable companies."

"Both Tepco and Marubeni are technically and financially qualified to fulfill their contractual obligations to (Napocor), enhance the reliability of existing plants, and more importantly, to live up to their commitment to implement the expansion of existing facilities, which will enhance security and stability of power supply in the Philippines," he added.

Marubeni has been doing business in the county since 1909, with interests in power, telecommunications, construction, industrial parks, food processing and general merchandise.

In the Philippine power sector, it currently owns and operates the 345-megawatt (MW) San Roque hydroelectric plant in Pangasinan and the 100-MW Mt. Apo geothermal plant in Davao.

Tepco, on the other hand, is a first-timer in the Philippine power sector, but is a well established energy company in Japan.

Outside of Japan, the company has interests in independent power producers, wind power and forestry plantation projects in Europe, the United States, Taiwan, Vietnam, the United Arab Emirates, Australia and Indonesia.

CURRENCIES

June 22, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.746603	1.000000	46.1040
Japan	Yen	0.006038	0.008087	0.3728
United Kingdom	Pound	1.487756	1.992700	91.8714
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095575	0.128013	5.9019
Switzerland	Franc	0.601372	0.805477	37.1357
Canada	Dollar	0.695096	0.931012	42.9234
Singapore	Dollar	0.486450	0.651551	30.0391
Australia	Dollar	0.632125	0.846668	39.0348
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.980537	2.652731	122.3015
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.199083	0.266652	12.2937
Brunei	Dollar	0.484870	0.649435	29.9416
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000083	0.000111	0.0051
Thailand	Baht	0.023222	0.031104	1.4340
UAE	Dirham	0.203279	0.272272	12.5528
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.339400	61.7517
Korea	Won	0.000806	0.001079	0.0497
China	Yuan**	0.097995	0.131254	6.0513
Argentina	Peso	0.242403	0.324675	14.9688
Brazil	Real	0.388997	0.521023	24.0212
Denmark	Kroner	0.134337	0.179931	8.2955
India	Rupee	0.018394	0.024637	1.1359
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216250	0.289645	13.3538
Mexico	New Peso	0.069098	0.092550	4.2669
New Zealand	Dollar	0.568841	0.761905	35.1269
South Africa	Rand	0.104610	0.140115	6.4599
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022672	0.030367	1.4000

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—June 21, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of June 21, 2007

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of June 22, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCK	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5.2	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	12.5	13.25	12.5	13.25	203,300
71.5	30.5	Banco de Oro-EPCI Inc.	71	71.5	71	71	271,000
73.5	43.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	72.5	72.5	71.5	71.5	230,500
935	630	China Banking Corp.	920	930	920	930	7,130
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	2,600
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank, Inc	0.57	0.57	0.56	0.56	9,880,000
75.5	30.5	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	73	75.5	73	74	33,252,300
65	32	Philippine National Bank	62	65	60	62.5	667,000
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	65	65	65	65	1,000
72	40	Philippine Bank of Communications	51	51	51	51	1,400
39.57	14.13	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	36.5	37	36	36	583,000
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	84.5	84.5	84.5	84.5	29,800
66	41.54	Union Bank of the Philippines	63	63	63	63	56,500
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
3.81	1.72	ATR KimEng Financial Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	136,000
1.5	0.6	Bankard Inc.	1.3	1.5	1.3	1.44	6,285,000
11.5	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	11	11.5	11	11.5	729,900
1.04	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	1.02	1.04	0.98	0.99	1,300,000
1,710.00	1,500.00	Manulife Financial Corp.	1,660.00	1,660.00	1,660.00	1,660.00	320
5	4.05	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.6	4.6	4.5	4.5	3,801,000
3.1	0.99	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.95	3.1	2.95	3	601,000
1,005.00	210	The Philippine Stock Exchange, Inc	860	880	855	855	16,190
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,040
1.94	1.2	iVantage Corp.	1.88	1.9	1.84	1.84	1,931,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
67.5	41	First Gen Corp.	66.5	67	66.5	66.5	3,382,900
88	41	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	87	88	86.5	87	1,746,300
12.75	7	Manila Water Co. Inc.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.5	5,754,000
102	14	Manila Electric Co. "A"	99	100	99	99.5	380,000
104	20.5	Manila Electric Co. "B"	100	102	100	100	601,300
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.6	5.7	18,987,000
5.8	3.5	Petron Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.5	5.6	7,996,000
2.5	1.6	Salcon Power Corp.	2.28	2.28	2.26	2.26	40,000
1.9	0.91	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.62	1.64	1,239,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.6	5.7	5.5	5.7	283,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.36	2.36	2.3	2.34	1,246,000
2.75	1.24	CADP Group Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	12,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26	26	26	10,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	55	55	54.5	55	31,400
7	4.6	Pancake House Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	100,000
1.9	0.77	RFM Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.6	1.72	2,578,000
4.05	2.2	Roxas Holdings	2.46	2.48	2.46	2.46	466,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	69.5	71.5	69.5	71.5	204,500
88	69.5	San Miguel Corp. "B"	75.5	77	75.5	77	2,981,500
0.61	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	500,000
22	15.25	Universal Robina Corp.	18.5	19	18.5	19	4,640,500
		CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
5.8	1.17	EEI Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	274,000
4.6	1.06	Fortune Cement Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.15	4.2	137,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.3	8.5	8.3	8.5	202,000
7	1.2	Republic Cement Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	6,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.76	1.8	2,327,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.3	1.42	Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.8	877,000
2.5	2	Euro-Med Laboratories Phil. Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	10,000
1.4	0.51	Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.36	1,211,000
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.43	0.06	Picop Resources Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.38	0.39	78,600,000
		HOLDING FIRMS					
3.9	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.6	3.65	3.6	3.65	202,000
0.165	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.155	0.165	0.155	0.155	185,840,000
1.28	0.18	APC Group Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.2	1.24	82,152,000
3.6	1.4	ATN Holdings Inc. "A"	3	3.2	2.75	2.8	7,862,000
3.3	1.48	ATN Holdings Inc. "B"	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	50,000
0.018	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.013	0.014	0.012	0.013	438,200,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.013	0.014	0.013	0.014	161,500,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.7	8,369,000
0.019	0.007	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.016	0.019	0.016	0.019	1,742,700,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.3	6.3	6.1	6.3	15,688,000
1.38	0.47	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	1.32	1.38	1.24	1.26	3,846,000
1.5	0.085	Asia Amalgamated Holdings Corp.	1.28	1.28	1.12	1.16	299,000
2.9	0.89	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.65	2.65	3,725,000
5.6	0.8	Aries Prime Resources Inc.	3.9	4.7	3.9	4.7	266,000
590	275	Ayala Corp.	575	580	570	570	83,040
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.75	4.8	4.7	4.7	286,000
5.4	0.99	Benpres Holdings Corp.	5.1	5.2	5	5.1	7,868,000
9.8	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	8.9	9.2	8.9	9.2	891,000
2	0.7	F and J Prince Holdings Corp. "A"	1.96	1.96	1.9	1.9	166,000
8	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.7	7.7	2,433,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	3	3	3	3	165,000
14.5	5.4	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.5	671,500
0.8	0.185	MEDCO Holdings Inc.	0.71	0.75	0.71	0.75	280,000
0.95	0.1	Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.95	0.75	0.8	2,110,000
30	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	27	28	26.5	26.5	1,222,600
11.5	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	11.25	11.5	10.75	11	5,648,600
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.75	3.7	3.75	219,000
0.038	0.009	Pacifica Inc. "A"	0.036	0.038	0.036	0.037	171,200,000
1.54	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.12	1.12	1.12	1.12	10,000
0.75	0.16	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.67	0.68	24,500,000
450	209	SM Investments Corp.	437.5	437.5	430	432.5	62,880
2.2	0.71	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.74	1.74	1.72	1.72	510,000
0.73	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.68	0.69	0.66	0.66	79,700,000
1.06	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	790,000
1.6	0.71	South China Resources Inc.	1.56	1.56	1.52	1.52	353,000
0.75	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.74	0.75	0.66	0.68	15,130,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	730,000
1.06	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.96	0.96	1,590,000
19.25	8.96	Ayala Land Inc.	18.5	18.5	18	18.25	17,764,900
1.88	0.99	Belle Corp.	1.86	1.88	1.8	1.8	18,379,000
4.7	1.86	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.5	4.6	4.4	4.6	774,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.85	2.9	2.6	2.85	442,000
0.72	0.25	Crown Equities Inc.	0.7	0.72	0.67	0.71	12,370,000
0.83	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.83	0.83	0.74	0.76	26,810,000
3.25	0.72	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	3.15	3.25	3.15	3.2	310,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.87	0.92	0.87	0.92	139,770,000
0.32	0.03	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	13,010,000
1.38	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.26	1.28	29,638,000
2.44	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.34	53,792,000
3.3	2.16	Highlands Prime Inc.	3	3	2.95	2.95	635,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. "A"	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	382,300,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	55,400,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.49	0.49	20,780,000
1.12	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	1.08	1.1	1.04	1.06	14,277,000
4.4	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	4.15	4.25	4.15	4.2	73,805,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.4	4.4	260,000
0.7	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.68	0.7	0.65	0.67	24,140,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.7	0.76	0.67	0.75	74,440,000
8.4	1.1	Polar Property Holdings Corp.	6	8.4	6	8.4	2,909,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	21.75	21.75	20.25	20.25	7,520,600
5.7	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.4	5.6	5.4	5.6	4,904,000
15	7.2	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	14.5	14.5	14	14.25	8,744,900
1.34	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	1.2	1.34	1.2	1.24	55,164,000
0.36	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.33	12,110,000
		MEDIA					
34	14	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31.5	31.5	122,200
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.16	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.66	1.68	1.64	1.64	4,478,000
1,445.00	895	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,375.00	1,375.00	89,280
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,695.00	2,695.00	2,660.00	2,690.00	77,620
7.9	3.2	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.8	6.9	6.8	6.9	2,499,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.17	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.32	0.33	45,300,000
10.25	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9.2	9.2	9	9.1	128,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7	7.3	7	7.2	13,634,000
0.065	0.0274	ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.065	0.0525	0.055	712,600,000
2.9	1.8	Ionics Inc.	2.46	2.5	2.42	2.46	1,058,000
0.185	0.04	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.16	0.185	118,830,000
2.08	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	179,000
0.0725	0.027	PhilWeb.Com Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0675	0.07	814,100,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	4.5	4.7	4.4	4.5	10,070,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.92	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.88	1.92	624,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	5.9	6	5.9	6	111,000
32	13	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	31.5	31.5	29.5	29.5	1,250,500
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	2.04	2.06	2.04	2.04	350,000
1.74	0.8	Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	40,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	3.85	4	3.85	3.95	3,968,000
5.2	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	5	5	5	5	130,000
4.55	2.8	Philippine Racing Club Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	1,000
0.98	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.94	0.94	0.88	0.88	3,360,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	1.08	1.08	0.99	1	2,710,000
		EDUCATION					
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc.	3.35	3.4	3.35	3.4	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
7.5	2.75	Easycall Comm. Phils. Inc.	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	8,000
41	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	25.5	25.5	25.5	25.5	300
5.3	1.88	Macroasia Corp.	5	5.3	5	5	3,294,000
17.25	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16	16.5	16	16.25	883,000
30	9.8	Paxys Inc.	25	25	24.75	25	294,000
4	1.3	Philippine Seven Corp.	3	3	3	3	1,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.015	0.017	1,344,300,000
7.6	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	303,000
7.7	3	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	304,000
21.25	6.5	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.5	3,765,500
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	13	13	12.75	12.75	152,000
5	1.7	Dizon Copper Silver Mines Inc.	4.4	4.6	4.4	4.5	178,000
3.05	0.0602	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.95	3.05	2.85	2.95	147,499,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.32	0.32	0.3	0.31	130,550,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	17,680,000
0.038	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.036	0.036	0.035	0.036	90,800,000
0.041	0.0187	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.037	0.038	0.037	0.037	163,400,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	1,089,600,000
6.4	3.15	Philex Mining Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.6	5.8	8,375,000
30	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	29	29	29	29	91,600
1.36	0.32	United Paragon Mining Corp.	1.16	1.2	1.16	1.2	1,593,000
1.8	0.5	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.42	1.46	1.42	1.42	6,173,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.24	Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.48	0.54	0.47	0.51	60,380,000
0.025	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.024	0.024	0.023	0.023	159,000,000
0.027	0.0095	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	20,000,000
14.62	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	28,600
0.028	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.025	266,400,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

Key WTO players throw in towel at Potsdam talks

POTSDAM, GERMANY—HOPES for a global trade deal this year were sent into a tailspin Thursday after crunch talks between four key players in the World Trade Organization (WTO) collapsed.

The negotiations between the United States, the European Union, Brazil and India in Potsdam, west of Berlin, ruptured on the same fault lines that have kept a multilateral accord elusive for nearly six years—farm subsidies and open markets.

In Washington, US President George W. Bush accused Brazil and India of fighting for their own interests at the expense of poorer countries.

"The president is disappointed that certain countries are blocking an opportunity to expand trade," White House spokesperson Tony Fratto said.

"Large economies like Brazil and India should not stand in the way of progress for smaller, poor developing nations, but that appears to be what happened in Germany this week."

Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, flanked by Indian Commerce Minister Kamal Nath, explained their walk-out in Potsdam: "It was useless to continue the discussion given what was on the table."

Amorim said differences over Western state backing for farmers—a constant bone of contention in the current Doha round of trade talks launched in 2001—were to blame for the failure of the three-day huddle.

The talks, which also included US Trade Representative Susan Schwab, EU Trade Commissioner Peter Mandelson and Agriculture Commissioner Mariann Fischer Boel, were originally scheduled to run until Saturday.

WTO Director General Pascal Lamy tried to put a brave face on the breakdown, saying a global deal was still possible.

"Convergence among these members would have been helpful to pave the way towards multilateral convergence," Lamy, who did not take part in the talks, said in a statement from Geneva.

The WTO had been hoping to reach an agreement by the end of the year that would accelerate international trade and give poor nations better access to rich markets.

Participants fear the US presidential campaign next year could make fruitful international negotiations on trade impossible.

Under the organization's rules, any deal must be approved by consensus and even a single dissenting voice can block it.

Developing countries and wealthy nations are at loggerheads over the degree of state support for agricultural markets and an acceptable level of protection against imports, primarily in the European Union and the United States.

Rich nations are also looking for more concessions from developing nations on access to their markets for industrial goods or for services companies.

Agreement between the G4 members is seen as crucial if a final accord is to be reached.

Schwab said the United States was deeply disappointed with the outcome, dismissing proposals by the emerging nations as unhelpful, in particular with regard to opening markets to manufactured goods.

"The US and EU alone can't deliver a successful Doha round," she said, adding: "What we are asking is minimal compared with the protection that these countries have.

Mandelson insisted the conflict was not a "North-South showdown," saying some progress had been made in Potsdam on agricultural market access and subsidies, export competition and export subsidies.

"We have moved, moved, and moved again in the last year or so in different parts of the agricultural negotiation ... and we had a final move left in us to reach a balanced, equitable, ambitious conclusion," he said.

"While in Europe we are prepared to pay a lot, we cannot do so for next to nothing in return." But Amorim said Washington and Brussels were far from agreeing to the cap on subsidies that developing countries were seeking—12 billion dollars per year for the United States and $20 billion for the European Union.

At Potsdam, according to Amorim, "the developed countries found common levels of comfort for them." Nath said the West was only interested in "perpetuation of the inequalities in global trade."

"This round is about trade flows from developing countries to developed countries, not the other way round," he said.

The G4 powers are intended to represent poor and rich countries' interests at the WTO but developing nations questioned whether they were able to adequately represent the interests of poor countries.

"Although two of the G4 (Brazil and India) are developing countries, they cannot be expected to carry the responsibility of representing the views of all developing countries," Jamaica's ambassador to the G90 Plus group of poorer WTO economies, Gail Mathurin, said in Geneva. *AFP*

Blackstone raises $4.1B

NEW YORK—BLACKSTONE GROUP LP priced its initial public offering at the top end of the range on Thursday, even as lawmakers pushed for its delay, raising $4.13 billion in the largest US IPO since 2002.

The pricing, closely watched by regulators and financial markets worldwide, proved demand for the offering was heavy despite pressure from Congress.

Blackstone's planned opening on the New York Stock Exchange on Friday is a watershed event for the booming private equity industry as it is the first major US buyout firm to take part of itself public.

The $31-per-unit IPO values Blackstone at $33.48 billion, or roughly a third of Goldman Sachs Group Inc.'s market value, and three-quarters the size of Lehman Brothers.

IPO underwriters, led by Morgan Stanley and Citigroup, have the option to buy 20 million more units, on top of the 133.3 million being sold, to cover overallotments. If exercised, that would add another $620 million to Blackstone's coffers.

Blackstone co-founders Stephen Schwarzman, 60, and Peter Peterson, 81, will earn a huge windfall from the IPO, pocketing more than $2.4 billion between them. Schwarzman's 23 percent stake in the company is worth $7.74 billion alone.

Schwarzman and Peterson founded Blackstone with $400,000 in 1985 after leaving top posts at Lehman. It started as mainly an M&A advisory boutique, and grew into a private equity giant.

In addition to its advisory, private equity, and real estate group, the firm has six other investment funds with more than $88 billion under management. *Reuters*

Yen wilts, Asia chip stocks up

SINGAPORE—ASIAN STOCK MARKETS fell across the board yesterday as investors cashed in recent gains, while the euro hit a record high against the yen and the Aussie dollar touched an 18-year peak against the dollar.

Oil was stable just above $70 a barrel as the market digests news of ample US stockpiles and easing worries about a strike in Nigeria, while gold held steady after dropping several dollars an ounce the day before.

A rally in Asian tech stocks limited falls on regional share markets after a brokerage upgrade on sector heavyweight Advanced Micro Devices Inc. energized the US market on Thursday, firming up hopes of a global rebound for the chip sector.

In Japan, chip-test maker Advantest jumped 3.6 percent, while chip equipment maker Tokyo Electron Ltd. gained 1.9 percent.

But the broader market was weaker, with the Nikkei ending down 0.28 percent as investors took profits in property stocks such as Mitsubishi Estate Co. Ltd., which fell 3.9 percent. The yen's weakness hit importers such as food and paper companies.

MSCI's measure of Asia-Pacific stocks excluding Japan fell 0.35 percent, a day after posting its fifth consecutive record closing high.

South Korean shares fell sharply as Korea Exchange Bank dropped after its majority shareholder sold a stake at a discount, while other lenders fell on expectations a planned sale of the bank would be delayed. Korea Exchange Bank fell 3.4 percent.

The benchmark KOSPI ended down 1.3 percent. Samsung Electronics gained 0.34 percent and Hynix Semiconductor added 0.6 percent.

In Taiwan, stocks ended flat after tech shares such as Mediatek had led the market to its highest level in seven years. Mediatek ended up 1.9 percent.

A rate hike by Taiwan's central bank the previous day also led to hopes of more investment flowing into the markets.

Nanya Technology Corp., Taiwan's second-largest DRAM maker, gained 2.5 percent and Powerchip Semiconductor Corp. ended up 2 percent.

Hong Kong blue chips also eased after the market's recent record-setting run as investors sold gainers such as oil stocks and bourse operator Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing.

The yen slipped to the weaker side of 124 yen per dollar in early European trade, while the euro jumped to a fresh record high against the yen.

Traders say the yen was likely to fall further.

"A series of investment trust funds for Japanese individual investors is on sale this week as well as next week, and that may push the yen to fall further," said currency strategists at JPMorgan Chase in a note to clients.

JPMorgan Chase estimated the size of this yen selling could amount to 500 billion yen, or about $4 billion. *Reuters*

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INVITATION TO BID

The Land Bank of the Philippines invites interested parties to bid for the following properties on CASH and "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" BASIS:

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
1. Unit C- 1,000 sqm office condo unit	2nd Floor, Electra House Bldg., 115 Esteban St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	P 42,500,000.00
2. Unit 201- 385 sqm office condo unit	Ground Floor, Sagittarius Condominium, H.V. dela Costa Street, Makati City	P 30,800,000.00
Various residential lots at Luzon Avenue, Manila Marina Baytown, Parañaque City : 3. Lot 2 Blk 4 – 645 sqm		P 9,675,000.00
4. Lot 3 Blk 4 – 650 sq.m		P 9,750,000.00
5. Lot 4 Blk 4 – 645 sq.m		P 9,675,000.00
6. Lot 5 Blk 4 - 650 sq.m		P 9,750,000.00
7. A 1,281 sqm res'l lot w/ res'l bldg	Park Ave. Don Bonifacio Subd, Balibago, Angeles City, Pampanga	P 3,691,000.00
8. A 200-sqm res'l lot w/ 3-storey school bldg.	Bo. Tanzang Luma, Imus, Cavite	P 2,058,000.00
9. 1 unit "Heidelberg" Offset Printing Machine, (used/2nd hand)	22 Col. Divino cor Karen Sts., Sto. Nino, Marikina City	P 1,800,000.00
10. Scrap materials from supermarket and office bldg.	Canetown Subd., Brgy. Dolores and Alacaygan, Victorias City Negros Occidental	P 480,000.00

Sealed bids together with the 10% bid bond in the form of Cash or Manager's Check will be received at the Special Assets Department, 30th Floor, Landbank Plaza, Malate, Manila on **July 5, 2007**, not later than **10:00 am.**

In case of **CLOSELY CLUSTERED TOP BIDS** (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be followed immediately by an open bidding in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate. **The increase in the open bidding shall be in multiples of P10,000.00.**

The Bid Documents will be available at the Special Assets Dept. (c/o May or Tiffany) starting June 25, 2007.

The Pre-Bid Conference will be held on June 29, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at the 30th Floor Conference Room, Landbank Plaza, 1598 M.H. Del Pilar St., Malate.

Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above-listed properties as well as legal status of the title before submitting their bids. The sale of the properties shall be on "AS-IS-WHERE-IS" basis. The winning bidder shall take possession of the awarded property without seeking assistance from the Bank. The award in favor of the winning bidder shall be subject to the approval of the LBP approving authorities.

If for any reason the above-mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

For more information, please visit or call the SPAD at telephone no. 551-2200 locals 2374, 2481, 7248, 2482, 7645.

Landbank reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality therein, and to accept the bid most advantageous to the Bank. The decision of Landbank shall be final and binding.

HEAD OFFICE COMMITTEE ON ASSET DISPOSAL

(PDI – June 23, 2007)

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Babies need breast milk

By Rebecca B. Singson, MD, FPOGS, FPSCPS
Contributor

MANY BREAST-FEEDING moms believe that they need to give up breastfeeding just because they need to go back to work.

Moms should realize that with strong commitment, they can continue to provide the best food for their baby if they learn to pump and store their milk by freezing way before going back to work. This way, while you are at work, your baby continues to be breastfed with your own milk. Get to know about the essentials of breastmilk storage as recommended by the WHO/Unicef.

How long can breast milk be stored?

Breast milk is rich in antibodies and many other anti-infective enzymes that can keep the bacteria in check and prevent the milk from spoiling. Refrigerated milk has more anti-infective properties than cow's milk with its 200 ingredients compared to only about 40 ingredients in cows milk.

According to the WHO/Unicef, breast milk can last as long as 8 hours at room temperature and up to 24 hours in the refrigerator.

Recommendations

The La Leche League has a slight variation on their recommendations as follows:

- Breast milk can stay up to 10 hours at room temperature (66-72°, 19-22°C) up to 10 hours.
- It can keep in a refrigerator for up to 8 days if the temp setting is 32-39°F, 0-4°C. Most refs are adjusted to 38-40°F, 3-4C so check your temp settings to see if you are up to optimal temp. Another study, Pardou 1994, found that after 8 days of refrigeration some of the milk actually had lower bacterial levels than it did on the day it was expressed.
- If you store it in a freezer compartment inside a refrigerator (variable temperature 0-2°F or minus 17-16°C due to the door opening frequently) breastmilk can be kept up to 2 weeks.
- It can stay even longer in a freezer compartment with a separate door for up to 3 to 4 months.
- It can keep longest in a separate deep freeze (0°F, -19°C) for up to 6 months or longer.

Storing, warming milk

What container can be used to keep the milk?

You can use a cup, glass, jug or jar with a wide mouth hard plastic or glass containers with tops that fit well. These containers should be washed in hot soapy water and rinsed well of any soap residues. Pour boiling water before you use the container to kill germs. Make sure you wash and clean your hands before pumping and storing.

What is the best way to warm my milk from storage?

If you have running water, thaw and/or heat using that. Otherwise place the warm water in a container and immerse the container with milk in it. Make sure you do not bring the temperature of milk to boiling point or you will destroy many proteins which render antibiotic properties to the milk.

Sometimes the cream may separate but swirling can redistribute the cream to the milk. Swirling can also distribute the heat throughout the milk and make sure to test the temperature on your inner wrist before giving to your baby. Never microwave milk to heat it.

Once thawed out, milk can be refrigerated for up to 24 hours but should not be brought back to the freezer. There is no data on the safety of keeping or discarding leftover milk in a bottle after feeding.

Most working women go to work to give their family a better quality of life through their financial contribution not realizing that the best edge they can give their children in life is a higher IQ, a stronger immune system, protection from cancer and disease, sharper visual acuity that comes from giving her breast milk for 6 months to 2 years of her infant's life.

WHO/Unicef will celebrate World Breastfeeding Week (Waba) from Aug. 1 to 7. World Breastfeeding Day is on Aug. 1. The theme is "Breastfeeding: The 1st Hour Save One Milliuon Babies!"

Dr. Rebecca B. Singson, a breastfeeding advocate, set up ReBirth Spa for lactation and prenatal massage at Asian Hospital and Medical Center to support breastfeeding.

A BREAST-FEEDING mom MANDY NAVASERO

Antidiabetic drug increases heart risk?

MEDICAL FILES

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

AFTER A LECTURE DURING THE RECENTLY concluded mid-year convention of the Philippine Neurological Association, Dr. Esther Bitanga, president of the Stroke Society of the Philippines, asked me about the much-publicized risk of heart attack and cardiovascular death supposed to be linked to the intake of rosiglitazone, a popular drug used in the treatment of diabetes.

The concern and outright panic in some patients were actually due to the published news items of a research conducted by Steve Nissen, MD, and Kathy Wolski, MPH, published in the New England Journal of Medicine. Their metaanalysis, which pooled together the results of 42 reported clinical trials, suggested that rosiglitazone is associated with a statistically significant risk of heart attack and heart-related deaths.

In the metaanalysis of Steven and Wolski, out of some 14,000 patients on the drug in the various studies, there were 86 heart attacks in those taking rosiglitazone, and 72 in the control group who were not on this drug. When they did the statistical analysis, it turned out to be significant. As most researchers agree, what may seem to be statistically significant may not have any clinical relevance. It may just be a statistical artifact which poses no real threat or risk to the patient. To put it in perspective, the actual risk is something like one in 600.

Limitations in the study

A metaanalysis is not the type of research study that can draw definitive conclusions. It is an odd pooling of various studies, with different designs or methodologies, different populations of patients under different clinical circumstances. The stringent requirements of specific well-designed trials aimed at identifying risks, are not present. Besides, the noted increased risk of cardiac events was coming from the smaller trials wherein the screening of patients were not as rigid as in the larger trials which did not show any significant increase in the risk.

Even Doctors Nissen and Wolski recognized these limitations in their published study. They said: "Our study has important limitations. We pooled the results of a group of trials that were not originally intended to explore cardiovascular outcomes ... many of these trials were small and short-term, resulting in few adverse cardiovascular events or deaths. Accordingly, the confidence intervals for the odds ratios for myocardial infarction and death from cardiovascular causes are wide, resulting in considerable uncertainty about the magnitude of the observed hazard (risk of heart attack and heart-related death)."

One important limitation which the authors recognized is that they did not have access to original source of data for any of these trials. Their metaanalysis was based only on published summaries of events. "The lack of availability of source data did not allow the use of more statistically powerful time-to-event analysis. A metaanalysis is always considered less convincing than a large prospective trial designed to assess the outcome of interest," the authors stated.

Allay apprehensions

The Philippine chapter of the American Association of Clinical Epidemiologists, headed by Dr. George Tan, has also come out with a position paper to allay the apprehensions of those taking any rosiglitazone preparation (Avandia, Avandamet and Avandaryl).

According to a part of the AACE statement, "The results (of Steven's and Wolski's metaanalysis) should not be cause for panic as the risk appears to be small. Also, the authors admit that the study was limited by lack of access to complete data and relatively low numbers of adverse events. Moreover, studies of this nature are not as conclusive as large randomized clinical trials conducted specifically for ... evaluating heart disease risk. Such a trial involving 4,500 patients, the Record study, started in 2000, is ongoing. The interim analysis of the Record trial has not noted such unfavorable effects.

"Rosiglitazone has been a valuable part of the treatment armamentarium for millions of people worldwide with type 2 diabetes since 1999. Nevertheless, the safety warning cannot be ignored.

"As physicians, we are foremost advocates for patient welfare, and we therefore urge patients taking rosiglitazone (especially those with heart problems) to contact their health care providers and discuss the appropriate action. Patients should not stop their medication abruptly as this may also entail great risk."

So the bottomline for those on rosiglitazone: No cause for alarm at the moment. You're better off taking the drug than discontinuing it without your doctor's advice.

TV, obesity and heart attacks

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

"THIS MAY SOUND WEIRD," CONFIDED my good friend, mother to two boys in Grades 3 and 5. "But I am actually happy that my kids are going back to school. Last summer, they spent half their time watching TV. I think they forgot most of what they learned last year, and to make matters worse, they gained at least five pounds each!"

This was hardly surprising, and indeed, a recent study by British scientist Aric Sigman revealed that excessive TV watching was linked to obesity, behavioral and sleeping problems in children. (For more details, refer to my June 9 article "TV and The Problem of Attention" in the Lifestyle section.) Sigman is an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society and a member of the Institute of Biology.

In fact, Sigman recommends that children under 3 should watch no TV at all. There should be no TV sets in children's bedrooms, he argues, and new mothers (and in our case, caretakers as well) should be warned of these dangers.

TV guidelines

Sigman also gives the following guidelines: 30 minutes to one hour maximum of TV watching for children aged 3 to 7, one hour for those aged 7 to 12, and one-and-a-half hours for those aged 12 to 15, and two hours for teenagers aged 16 and above, and even for adults.

Stringent? Sigman calls TV watching a "major public health issue" and says that reducing TV viewing must be "the new priority for child health." These guidelines hold even for educational programs.

He cites Britain as an example. According to him, the British people watch TV for more hours a day and read less than any other European nation. British children are also the most obese, and by the time they become teenagers, they spend more than seven hours a day in front of the TV.

I thank Tonton Mapa, a concerned father, for calling my attention to this study.

Heart attacks

What should we do if we suddenly have a heart attack and nobody is in sight? Sure, we can do CPR on a victim, but how about for ourselves?

I received an e-mail, forwarded by my friend Nesy Fernandez, advising us that at the onset of radiating pain (which can be from the heart through the arms to the jaw or neck) to "start coughing repeatedly and very vigorously." Take a deep breath before each cough, and the cough must be "deep and prolonged, such as when producing sputum from the chest." Breathe and cough every two seconds (without stopping) until help arrives.

Why? Breathing gets oxygen into the lungs, and coughing "squeezes the heart and helps keep the blood circulating." This also helps the heart regain its rhythm.

When I asked a doctor about this method, he said it makes sense, and there is no harm in trying. But he ended with this admonition, "Prevention is better than cure. To prevent heart attacks, there is no substitute for a right diet and regular exercise."

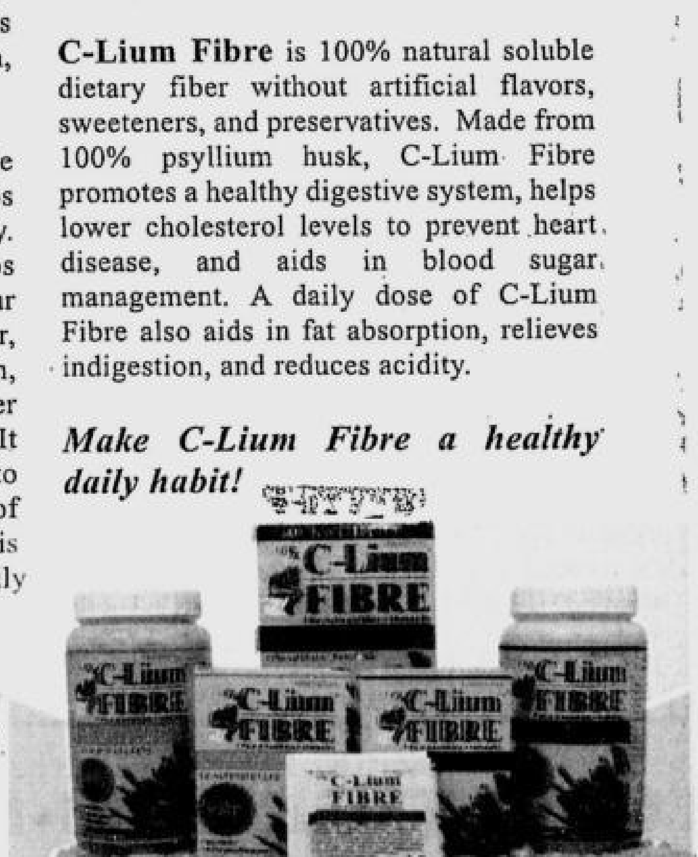
Thought for the day

My high school batchmate Christine Joy Pe sent this touch of Pinoy humor:

A lizard fell on a table. The scientist said, "*Reptila scincidae!*" Miss Kikay said, "Eew, a lizard!" Mr. Astig said, "Shucks, butiki!" The wealthy matron said, "Lacoste!" But the beggar said, "Wow, dinner!" Truly, perspective counts.

* * *

Queena N. Lee-Chua is a professor of mathematics and psychology at Ateneo de Manila University. Contact her at blessbook@yahoo.com.



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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND TO BID

The **BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP)**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective consultants to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and if found eligible and short-listed, to bid for the Conduct of Consumer Expectations Survey (CES) for the 1st Quarter (January-March) 2008, per BSP Terms of Reference.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for this consultancy services is P2.7 Million.

The scope of work includes, among others, the conduct of one (1) quarter survey which would cover all 17 regions in the country including ARMM, if possible. Each major area (NCR and outside NCR) shall have a sample size of about 2,500 households or a total of 5,000 samples nationwide. The Consultant's responsibilities shall include: a) survey design; b) conduct of survey (e.g., survey enumeration/data collection, field supervision, field editing, and call backs); and c) data encoding and processing as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The list of minimum eligibility requirements is indicated in the Eligibility Form. Eligibility of prospective consultants shall be checked using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Interested consultants must meet the following criteria:

1.0 The prospective consultants must have a minimum of two (2) years experience in the conduct of nationwide surveys.

2.0 The prospective consultants must have a minimum of five (5) computers that can be used for data encoding purposes.

3.0 The prospective consultants must have at least five (5) technical staff each with at least two (2) years experience in the conduct of surveys. The Permanent Survey Director / Manager to be assigned to this project must be at least a degree holder.

4.0 The prospective consultants must have a bank deposit of at least one million pesos.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas shall evaluate bids using the Quality-Cost Based Approach procedure through a weighted scoring system that simultaneously considers both the overall technical quality of the proposal and the financial bid (60-40). The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

The complete schedule of activities for shortlistings is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	Starting 25 June 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	06 July 2007, 9:30 A.M.
3. Submission/Opening of Eligibility Requirements	24 July 2007, 2:00 P.M.

The list of eligibility requirements may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat upon submission of a *letter of intent* and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P500.00**.

Bid documents will be available only to short-listed bidders (top 5 shall be considered) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P1,350.00** to the BSP Cashier.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract shall apply.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate/indemnify the consultant for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI–June 23, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office No. 8
Pawing, Palo, Leyte

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SUPPLY, DELIVERY & INSTALLATION OF 3 UNITS 75KVA TRANSFORMERS

The **NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA)** invites suppliers registered with the DTI, or SEC, with Tax Payer Identification Number (TIN), and who possess Mayor's Permit where their establishment is situated/operated;

1. **Supply & Delivery of 3- 75kVA distribution transformers at NFA Alangalang Grains Center.**
   Specification: Single Phase, double bushing, 7620/13, 200Y, 480/240V, OISC, Pad mounted current transformer, 400:5A, Brand New, with KWH Meter, electronic type, VM 63A and with complete accessories.
2. **Installation.**
3. **Approved Budget of Contract (ABC): P419,793.00**
   Scope of Work:
   1. Installation of 3-75kVA distribution transformer and its accessories (to include lighting arrester)
   2. Tapping/testing and energization.

Supply, Delivery, Installation/tapping and energization of the transformers shall be completed within 30 days from issuance or receipt of Notice to Proceed.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be obtained by Interested Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee, in cash, in the amount of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,500.00).

Interested Bidders may obtain further information and inspect the Bidding Documents at the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Secretariat, NFA Regional Office, Pawing, Palo, Leyte, Tel. No. 053-323-3084 / Fax # 053-323-3061 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

The Bidding Schedule is as follows:	Date	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	June 25-28, 2007, (8:00 am-5:00 pm)	NFA RO8 Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Pre-bidding conference	July 4, 2007, (9:30 am)	NFA Conf. Rm. Pawing, Palo, Leyte
Submission & Opening of Bid	July 16, 2007, (9:30 am)	-do-

All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid, in the following schedule and form or any combination thereof:

Cash or Cashier's Check or Manager's Check (Manager's check issued to NFA by a reputable commercial bank in Tacloban City) - 1% or
Surety Bond issued by GSIS marked "Callable on Demand" - 2.5%

The NFA reserves the right to accept and reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders, for any expense incurred in the preparation of bid documents.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO J. ADORABLE**
Assistant Regional Manager
Chairman, NFA-RBAC

(PDI–June 23, 2007)

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2002 FORD Expedition XLT Black, OYC-101	P 594,000.00
2002 Hyundai Starex SVX Gray, XJD-125	P 446,000.00

Deadline for submission of offer is on June 26, 2007.

For inquiries, please call:
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Hotline No. 8119797

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ADVISORY

Classified Ad placements for Monday, June 25 issue will be accepted until 2 p.m. of Saturday, June 23.
Please call Tel. 897-8425; 899-4427

More Classified Ads

Commission on Elections	Page A26
Department of Labor-NCR	Page A28
Landbank Special Assets	Page B5

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philippines Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (02) 454-0254
Website: www.nfa.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Various Laboratory Equipment

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA)*, through its *2007 Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of *P633,000.00* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *supply and delivery of various Laboratory Equipment*, as follows:

Item No.	Particulars	No. of Units	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1	Pipettor	1	25,000.00
2	AOAC Handbook, latest edition	1	30,000.00
3	Refrigerator	1	25,000.00
4	Aflatoxin Test Kit	1	22,000.00
5	Aflatoxin Extraction Kit	1	2,000.00
6	pH Meter	1	60,000.00
7	Fumehood	1	249,000.00
8	Tachometer	1	20,000.00
9	ELISA Reader	1	200,000.00
	TOTAL		633,000.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NFA* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *supply and delivery of various Laboratory and Power Plant Equipment*. Delivery is required within 60 calendar days from receipt of notarized contract. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the *NFA-BAC SECRETARIAT* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P3,000.00 in the form of *CASH*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *July 9, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.* at the *NFA Board Room, 6th Floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.*

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Board Room, 6th Floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City* on July 23, 2007 from 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m. Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the following form and amount.

Form of Security	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft of Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on *July 23, 2007 at 2:00 p.m.* at the *NFA Board Room, 6th Floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *NFA* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity	-	*NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contract Person	-	*Jose D. Chua / Violeta S. Villarama*
Address	-	*Philsugin Bldg., North Ave., Diliman, Quezon City*
Telephone/Fax No.	-	*(632) 455-2758*
E-mail address	-	*vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Website	-	*www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator & BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI - June 23, 2007)

MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER

Reference # :
Procurement of Various Drugs & Medicines, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents, Med./Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies & Instruments and Medical Equipment
Brgy. #6 San Julian, Batac, Ilocos Norte

Standard Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Revised on: July 28, 2004

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **MARIANO MARCOS MEMORIAL HOSPITAL & MEDICAL CENTER – BATAC, ILOCOS NORTE**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers / manufacturers / distributors / contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Procurement of Various Drugs and Medicines, Laboratory Supplies and Reagents Medical/Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies and Instruments and Medical Equipments.

Location : MMMH & MC, Brgy. # 6 San Julian, Batac, Ilocos Norte

Brief Description : Purchase of Various Drugs & Medicines, Laboratory Supplies & Reagents, Med./Surgical X-ray, Dental Supplies & Instruments and Medical Equipments used for daily maintenance and operations of the hospital.

Approved Budget For the Contract :

a.	Drugs and Medicines	=	P 30,402,000.00 (Revolving fund, Regular Fund
b.	Laboratory Supplies and and Reagents	=	P 10,048,144.54 (BDTF, Regular fund, income)
c.	Med./Surgical, X-ray, Dental Supplies and Instruments	=	P 7,470,806.52 (Regular Fund, Income, Hemo TF)
d.	Medical Equipments	=	P 15,390,000.00 (Income, Medicare Trust Fund)

Contract Duration : **180 days**
Delivery Period . **September 2007 to February 2008**

For contracts involving delivery of goods:

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last (state number of years, minimum 21) with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 9 – 23, 2007
2. Pre-bid Conference	July 11, 2007 @ 2:00 P.M.
3. Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility *(If single-stage bidding is used, delete this activity)* ; Pre-eligibility Checking	July 9 – 23, 2007
4. Opening of Bids	July 25 – 27, 2007 @ 2:00 P.M.
5. Bid Evaluation	July 31 to August 13, 2007
6. Post-qualification	August 14 – 20, 2007
7. Notice of Award	August 24 to September 2007

For single-stage bidding:

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 3,000.00 to the MMH and MC Cashier.

The **Mariano Marcos Memorial Hospital & Medical Center** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) LOUIE A. GUERRERO, M.D., FPCR
BAC Chairman

(PDI – June 23 & 30, 2007)

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Notice is hereby given that stock certificate no. 89705 of Anglo Philippine Holdings Corporation, which was issued and registered in the name of THE PHILODRILL CORPORATION as owner, has been reported lost. If no contest is received, a new certificate will be issued to The Philodrill Corporation in replacement thereof.

(PDI – June 9, 16 & 23, 2007)

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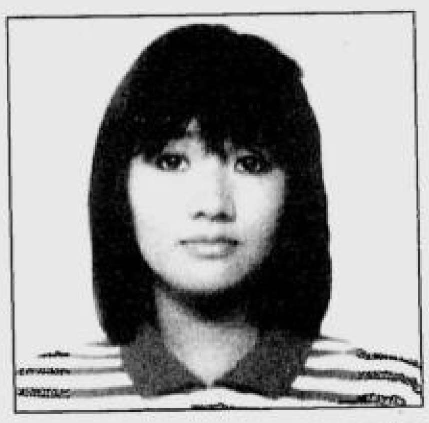

Notice is hereby given that Ms. **MA. MONICA N. SUGUITAN** whose picture appears above is accused of the crime of **Qualified Theft** docketed as Criminal Case No. **MC-99-2173** of the Regional Trial Court of **Mandaluyong City** and is the subject of an outstanding warrant of arrest. Positive information leading to her arrest shall be rewarded. Please contact Atty. Cesar G. David at Tel. Nos. 811-9863 and 811-9873.

(PDI – June 23, 2007)

OBITUARIES

... I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there be any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not defer or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again ...

William Penn

BENJAMIN M. CAMPOMANES, SR.

In Peace and Grace joined our Lord Father
on June 21, 2007 at the age of 86.

His loving wife **Luisa**; sister **Puring**; brothers **Salvador**(†) & **Gregorio**(†), his children **Malu** & **Ed**, **Atchu** & **Teddy**, **Mitchu**, **Benjo** & **Mae**, and **Chuchay** & **Boya**; grandchildren **Miki** & **Aileen**, **Mia**, **Khalid**, **Igo**, **Christina**, **Bojo**, **Marga**, **Gabbi** and **Bettina**, and his great grandchild **Layla**, give thanks to the Lord for the blessing of his life.

His remains lie in state at the Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish Church, Forbes Park, Makati City. There will be a Mass at 1:00 p.m. at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, before the cremation at 3:00 p.m.

BUSINESS

NFA cuts rice imports for '07

Agency will also try to keep budget deficit from rising

By Amy R. Remo and Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY HAS REduced its volume of rice imports for this year to 1.64 million metric tons due largely to the projected increases in local palay production.

The agency earlier estimated that, for 2007, the country would need to import 1.8 million metric tons of rice.

Last year, the NFA had imported a total of 1.65 million metric tons of rice from Vietnam, Thailand, China, Pakistan and the US.

Further increases in palay production are expected for the rest of the year, according to the Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, following the subsector's improved performance in the first quarter.

Palay production for the first three months reached 3.68 million metric tons, or 1.69 percent higher than last year's 3.62 million metric tons.

The BAS expects total palay harvest in 2007 to hit 16.2 million metric tons, up from last year's 15.33 million metric tons.

As of the first week of June, about 7.7 million bags, or close to 30 percent of the total rice imports, have already arrived to beef up the country's rice supply, the NFA said.

The NFA at present is struggling under the weight of a huge budget deficit which last year reached P16 billion.

The NFA has already committed to keep its budget deficit from growing, according to the Department of Finance.

Finance Undersecretary Jeremias Paul Jr. said the NFA has begun moves to streamline procedures in the conduct of day-to-day tasks.

By trimming operational costs, the NFA could at least keep its deficit from rising further, he said.

But Paul stressed the commitment was only to prevent a further rise of the deficit. He said it would be difficult for the NFA to commit to a substantial and immediate reduction.

Responding to criticisms over its financial woes that aggravated the national government's own fiscal problem, the NFA said the public had to understand it was natural for the agency to accumulate losses because of its mandate.

The NFA is tasked to ensure the supply of rice at a price affordable to many. To do so, it must buy the grain no matter what the price is in the global market, and sell low to domestic consumers.

DOE promulgates changes to Epira rules

By Abigail L. Ho

IN A BID TO SHIELD CONsumers from additional costs and to encourage large power users to continue generating their own power, the Department of Energy has promulgated amendments to two provisions in RA 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira).

An amendment to Rule 3 Section 4e of the Epira implementing rules and regulations will now allow power firms to automatically recover generation and foreign exchange-related costs, subject to verification and monitoring of the Energy Regulatory Commission.

On the other hand, the amended Rule 18 Section 7 of the Epira IRR extends for another three years, starting on June 30, the exemption of self-generating facilities from the payment of the universal charge.

With the implementation of the automatic recovery mechanism, "we will be able to balance the need for consumer protection ... enabling businesses to become financially viable," Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said in a statement yesterday.

He added that the amendment of the IRR provisions would allow the ERC to focus on "other equally important rate applications."

ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. had earlier said that if all 140 power distributors in the country would apply each they wanted to adjust their generation rates every month, the regulatory body would be swamped with 1,680 applications and 1,680 hearings in various localities each year.

RP expects 1M Japanese tourists by '10

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

TOKYO, JAPAN—THE DEPARTMENT OF Tourism aims to woo one million Japanese tourists over the next three years by tapping fast growing markets in Japan.

In particular, the DOT is homing in on three fast-growing markets: the "ladies market," the "active seniors," and the scuba divers.

The ladies market comprise women aged 20 to 50 who often travel overseas, while the "active seniors" are those born between 1947 and 1949 and who stay anywhere between seven days to two months in the country, tourism officials said during the 3rd Philippine Business Mission in Osaka, Nagoya and Tokyo.

One of the DOT's programs is to promote the Philippines to Japanese travel agents through what it calls a "Philippine Business Mission (PBM)"—a series of plenary presentations, tabletop discussions and individual meetings organized in the three largest cities of Japan: Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka.

Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" Durano told the media in Tokyo that the DOT has started shifting its campaign for Japanese tourists to cater to the young, single, female crowd, whereas in the past, bulk of tourist arrivals from Japan were male.

"At the end of 2004, we re-calibrated our strategy," Durano said. "In the past most of the (recreation) packages really catered to the Japanese male, but it was a segment that was declining. That's why we decided to reposition the country to cater to the fastest growing market segments—the scuba divers and the Japanese ladies."

Tourist arrivals from Japan reached the 400,000 mark for the first time in 2005, and climbed to an all-time high of over 421,000 in 2006.

Excluding airfare and hotel bookings, a Japanese tourist spends roughly $110 million a day for an average stay of four days.

Durano added that there are one million scuba divers registered in Japan, whereas the ladies market, also a growing market in that country, is usually the big spender.

Of total tourist arrivals in the Philippines, which hit 2.8 million in 2006, roughly 21 percent were Koreans, 18 percent were from North America, and 15 percent were from Japan.

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Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

PROPERTY

IMPROVED SEWERAGE SYSTEM

Big challenge for Metro Manila residents

By Charles E. Buban

HAVING NEARLY COMPLETED the waterworks system, Manila Water Co. Inc. now shifts its focus on improving the wastewater management system within the 23 cities and municipalities under its service area.

But this would not come easy for the 5.3-million consumers the company serves.

Manila Water president Tony Aquino believes wastewater management will be a major challenge, pointing out that unlike other key cities in Asia and elsewhere in the world, Metro Manila has little or virtually no adequate sewerage network.

Manila Water is responsible in providing not only waterworks but also sewerage service to Metro Manila's East Zone, which comprises the cities of Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Marikina, most parts of Quezon City, some parts of Manila, Taguig City, San Juan City and the municipality of Pateros as well as the cities and municipalities of Rizal province.

P75B needed

A World Bank study estimates that Metro Manila would need P75 billion to achieve a 61 percent sewerage coverage by 2022, and P250 billion in infrastructure expenditure to attain a 50 percent coverage in sanitation and sewerage services throughout the country in a span of 10 years.

Aquino recalled that when Manila Water took over the East Zone in 1997, only 5 percent of the area had good sewerage system (mostly in Makati City).

The rest still depends on individual or communal septic tanks which regularly have to be desludged every five to seven years.

To address this challenge, Manila Water announced it would increase its wastewater treatment capability from its present 10 percent to 30 percent by year 2010, and eventually to 60 percent by 2022.

Ruled out

However, Manila Water ruled out the installation of more subterranean sewerage system as this would already be very costly if not impossible to undertake (for the massive disruptions it would create) in most part of the East Zone.

Instead Manila Water has earmarked P5 billion for wastewater management and sanitation program that would include the employment of more than 40 desludging tankers as well as building treatment plants.

The company also spearheaded a community-based drive called "Sanitasyon para sa Barangay," which uses local barangay units as coordinators to further strengthen the program.

Last month, the company started operating its P330-million South Septage Treatment Plant in Taguig City, processing (for disposal or recycling) the domestic septage collected by the company's fleet of desludging tankers as well as sewage from the locators within the Food Terminal Inc. Complex.

86,000 households

With a capacity of 814 cubic meters per day, the FTI facility will initially serve 86,000 households residing in the cities of Makati, Mandaluyong, Pasig, Taguig and San Juan as well as the municipality of Pateros.

The facility is part of the World Bank-funded Manila Third Sewerage Program costing P3.14 billion.

Under this program, Manila Water is set to build a second septage plant in San Mateo, Rizal and a third one in Barangay Pinugay, Antipolo City.

NOW under the Vista Land roster of properties, clockwise from upper left: Camella's Drina, Communities Philippines' Solariega, Crown Asia's Valenza and Brittany's Michelangelo at Portofino.

Vista Land: RP's largest home builder

FOUR OF THE PHILIPPINES' REAL estate market leaders have combined their strengths to form what is now the largest home builder in the country. Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., the newly incorporated holding firm of the MB Villar Group, brings together under one roof four of the most innovative brands in property development—Brittany Corp., Camella Homes, Crown Asia and Communities Philippines.

The first and only property developer offering a full spectrum of horizontal residential products across all income segments, Vista Land also lays claim to the fact that it is now the country's home builder with the widest geographical reach.

4 brands

It boasts of the expertise and track record of Brittany for the high-end segment, Crown Asia for the middle market, Camella Homes for affordable and low-cost housing, and Communities Philippines as the vehicle that brings the three different brands to areas outside Mega Manila (Metro Manila and the neighboring provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Rizal, Batangas and Bulacan).

Brittany is a major provider of luxury high-end homes in master-planned communities, priced at P9 million or above. The company, known for its masterplanned developments such as Portofino, Brittany Bay and CrossWinds, and perceived as one of the most innovative developers in the country, recently ventured into the high-rise residential condominium segment with The Marfori in Muntinlupa, Mosaic in the Makati central business district and the newly launched Avant at The Fort. As of March 31, Brittany had 12 projects (including one leisure project) with an aggregate area of 258 hectares under development.

Middle-class homes

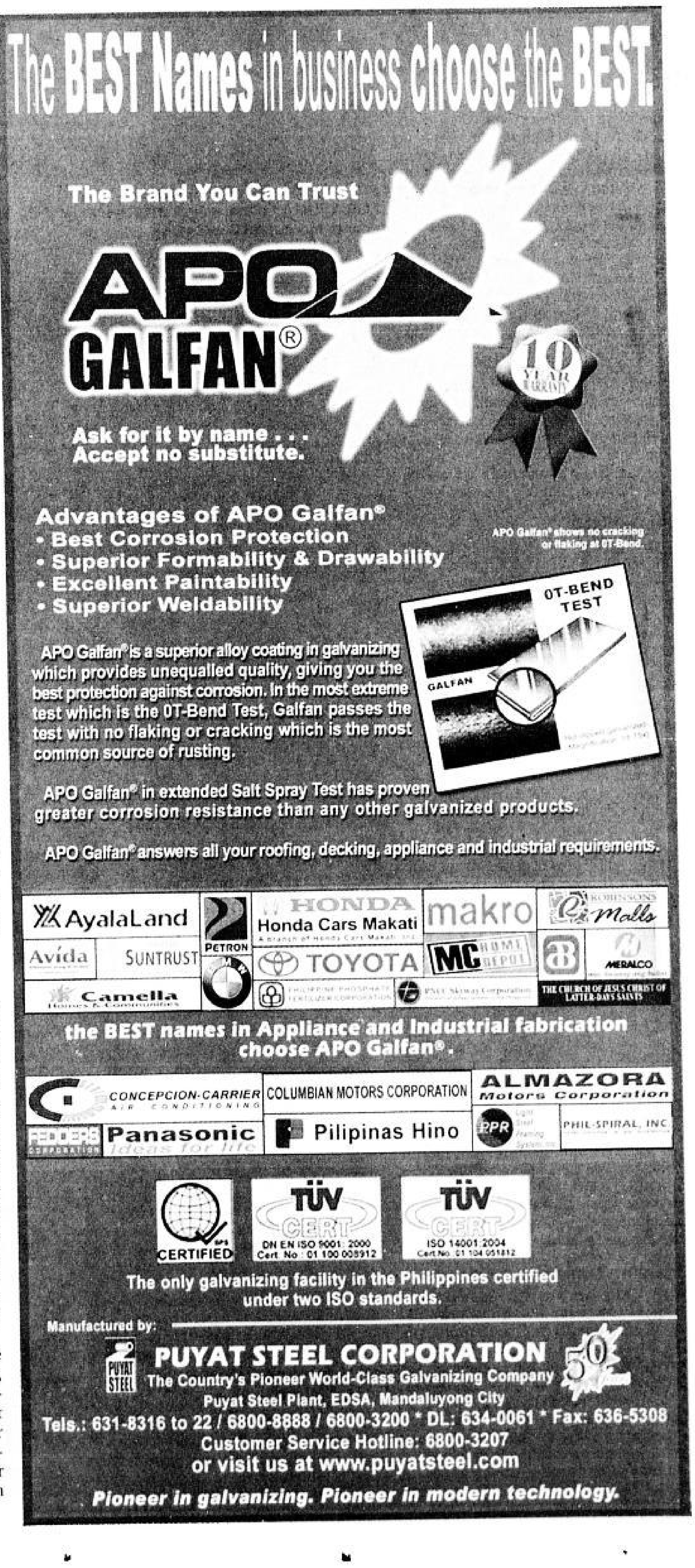
Crown Asia pioneered the development of large-scale themed projects catering to the middle market and primarily offers middle-class homes in Mega Manila priced between P3.5 million and P9 million. Since its establishment in 1995, Crown Asia has launched and developed more than 20 projects, of which 14 projects with an aggregate of 247 hectares were under development as of March 31. Crown Asia was awarded the "Gold Trusted Brand" award by Reader's Digest for 2006 and 2007.

Camella Homes, on the other hand, is recognized as the most preferred housing brand. Camella has been servicing the low-cost (including socialized) housing segment (priced below P1.3 million) and the affordable housing segment (P1.3 million to P3.5 million) in the Mega Manila area for over 30 years. Last year, Camella ventured into the condominium market with Pacific Residences launch of their low-rise condo in Taguig. As of March 31, it had 19 projects with an aggregate of 216 hectares under development.

Widest geographical reach

Communities Philippines has the widest geographical reach among Philippine property developers, offering residential properties under the Camella and Crown Asia brands in the regions outside Mega Manila. It utilizes Camella Homes' and Crown Asia's expertise and designs to offer houses in regional areas that are on par, in terms of quality, with the developments in Mega Manila. As of March 31, Communities Philippines had 22 projects covering 323 hectares under development in 13 cities and municipalities including Pangasinan, Pampanga, Bulacan, Batangas, Iloilo, Cebu, Leyte, Cagayan de Oro and Davao .

With the consolidation of these four major players into Vista Land, this cutting-edge real property developer has affirmed its position at the forefront of the industry. Their combined force is expected to further cement this position given their bid to double their geographic reach in the next two years.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Alegria Hills, Cagayan de Oro's new star rising

LIVING ARCHITECTURE

Marcos de Guzman Jr.

WHEN I WAS YOUNG I REmember our helpers telling me about how mesmerized they were upon seeing the lights of the skyline along Roxas Boulevard as their vessels entered Manila Bay. During my early visits to the United States, I, too, had been fascinated by the newness of their malls and cities. It is like the lowly moth being lured by the lamplight, a place of life and excitement. It parallels the excitement of watching a new star rise.

This is the one palpable reason Manila is overcrowded from the influx of migrants from the provinces. Whether these people are in search of a better life or purely for some adventure, they come in undeniable droves to a city already chockfull and teeming. However, recently, the situation has been showing some signs of improvement, not because Manila is getting better, but because the developing cities in the provinces are slowly becoming attractive alternatives to these once-migrant *kababayans*.

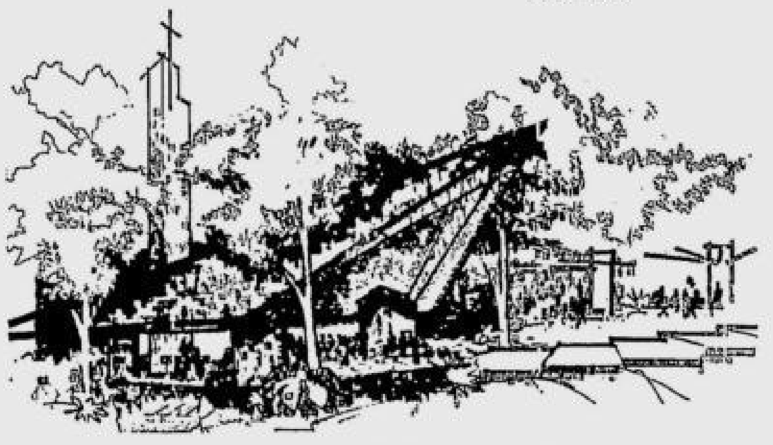
Indicators of urban progress

These days, most major cities in the country boast of well-lit commercial centers, tall buildings, and huge signs and billboards. Already the allure and excitement of Manila have been replicated elsewhere. It seems that the first indicator of urban progress in a locality is the opening of a McDonald's or Jollibee outlet.

The second indicator is the presence of an SM Mall, with its retinue of stores and restaurants. By then, that city is obviously on its way up. But the most convincing indicator of a city's growth is when big developers like Ayala Land Premiere put down stakes and break ground. Now, that signals the city is in full swing!

This is what has just happened to the city of Cagayan de Oro, where Ayala Land and its partner, Cebu Holdings Inc., launched Alegria Hills. This first-class subdivision is nestled along the hillside only a few minutes away from the city's business hub. It claims an excellent 360° view of the city, the mountain range and Macajalar Bay. I am proud to be one of the consulting architects for this breakthrough project, Ayala's initial residential venture in Mindanao. Alegria Hills is a high-end community development with amenities of the same high standard as other Ayala Land projects.

THE MAGNIFICENT site of the Alegria Hills residential subdivision development in Cagayan de Oro by Ayala Land Premiere



ARTIST'S rendition of the planned Chapel in the Grove, one of the exclusive amenities of Alegria Hills

Organic architecture

Its theme of organic architecture, as endorsed by legendary architect Frank Lloyd Wright, is a style close to my heart. Its focus is geared toward the preservation of the environment, respecting the existing terrain, and enhancing the surrounding greenery. Structures, such as guardhouses, clubhouses, view deck, and pool and sport complexes, shall also be based on the organic concept, wherein we look to nature as model and muse. Ideally, this means that all the public buildings would be built along proper sun and wind orientation. These would follow the contours of the land, corresponding with the naturally rolling terrain.

The use of local materials and plants will be encouraged. Parks and public areas would be designed as close to nature as possible, upholding the concepts of ecological balance and natural form. Attention will definitely be given to enabling residents to appreciate and connect with nature, a tenet espoused by organic architecture. There will be canyon trails and parks, gardens and orchards, places where residents can be themselves, and yet be one with creation.

With a development of this caliber in full swing, Cagayan de Oro has even more reasons to make its folks and big business stay on. This city is certainly the next bright star on the horizon.

Megaworld unveils Manhattan Garden City Tower 3

DUE TO INCREASING DEMAND, property giant Megaworld Corp., the top residential condominium and business process outsourcing (BPO) office buildings developer, is launching Tower 3 of its project, Manhattan Garden City in Araneta Center, Quezon City.

"Because of the huge demand, we are preselling Tower 3 ahead of schedule," revealed Anthony Charlemagne Yu, president of Megaworld Central Properties Inc.

"To date, 100 percent of Tower 1 and 70 percent of Tower 2 in MGC have been sold. We received pending reservations for corner units, which are available at Tower 3. The first three towers will comprise what we call Manhattan Parkway Residence, which will be accentuated by a deluxe retail arcade for the enjoyment of our residents.

"The architecture of Manhattan itself is the inspiration for the curvilinear façade of the three residential towers," Yu added. "Manhattan Parkway Residence will therefore blend well with the other commercial structures within the Araneta Center while enhancing the color and character of its skyline."

Accessibility

Buyers have made a beeline not only for future homes at MGC but also the unique opportunity of living well at the center of it all. Strategically located in the Philippines' original "malling" area, Manhattan Garden City is an enclave of residential high-rises accessible to the train systems of the MRT and LRT 2 via a 729-meter, elevated garden walkway that will connect all the towers.

Access to the train stations can be made easily through a grand transfer pavilion. Residents and tenants will thus enjoy the convenience of traveling speedily from MGC to the capital's commercial areas, premier universities and business districts.

Conceptualized by the Araneta Group and Megaworld, Manhattan Garden City will be linked to all spokes of the metro yet complete and self-sustaining. It is in the same complex where innumerable establishments offer casual dining, shopping and entertainment. But a major difference of MGC lies in its goal of community integration via nature-centered amenities that will lift the blanket of urban congestion and facilitate neighborly interaction.

FOR A FUN time shopping and dining, the fabulous Gateway Mall is just next door to Manhattan Garden City.

Unrivaled amenities

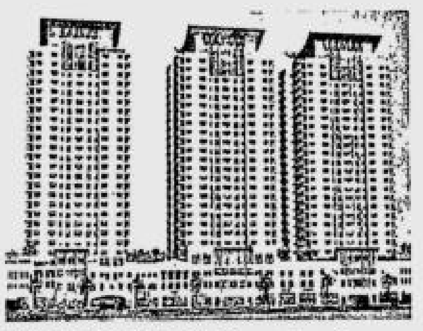
MGC's various amenities cater to people with a wide range of habits and aspirations. Fitness and sports buffs will surely be found in the gym, lap pool, tennis court, or basketball court. Young families will stake it out in the picnic area and playground.

The meditative types will gaze into the reflective pool or memorize every curve of the reflexology path. Book lovers can dream away while getting a tan on the sun deck. Finding one's own quiet nook will be simple enough as a landscaped area will embrace every block of MGC towers at the fourth level.

"I believe that the enormous success of Manhattan Garden City can be attributed to its unrivaled amenities, open-air nature setting, and being the first and only transit-oriented development linked to two mass transit systems," Yu explained.

Tower 3 is predicted to sell out soon as well due to strong demand from Filipinos who have foreseen the advantages of Manhattan-style living.

MANHATTAN Garden City is the first and only to have four kinds of amenities—from the passive to the active set—thus, giving you more forms of relaxation with your loved ones.



WITH THE STRONG uptake of Towers 1 and 2, Megaworld recently launched Tower 3 of Manhattan Garden City at the Araneta Center.

THE DOORS of Tivoli Garden marketing office are now open for visits. DMCI Homes sales team is more than willing to guide visitors about this project. Currently on display at the showroom are the two-bedroom (Asian Contemporary) and three-bedroom (Casual Elegance) units.

Art in Green: the grand launch of Tivoli Garden Residences

DMCI HOMES HAS UNVEILED ANOTHER landmark project that will have nature, greens and gardens at the heart of its development—Tivoli Garden Residences.

From a typical urban district in the middle of Makati and Mandaluyong, the project site is now brimming with life, and last May 5, future homeowners and guests were given a glimpse of the cosmopolitan life awaiting them at Tivoli Garden through a unique event called "Art in Green."

Fine art pieces were displayed at the marketing office for guests to appreciate, along with the delectable food fare from Una Mas, tantalizing music by Skarlet, and naturally, the exquisite features of Tivoli Garden Residences.

Artworks

After the blessing of the marketing office and model units by Fr. Norberto Ochoa of St. Andrews Parish Church, Parañaque City, guests milled around the showroom to view artworks by artist Lucy Fernando from Yellow Door Art Gallery. Amibie Abano from Philippine Printmakers Association of the Philippines meanwhile presented a print-making technique which made the guests curious.

Other artists' works which excited the crowd were printed images highlighting nature's beauty, done by Fil Dela Cruz, Benjie Torrado Cabrera, Jess Flores, Mario Parial, Rhoda Recto, Chris Bayani, Bernard Temporosa and Jeannie Javelosa.

Daily offering

At Tivoli Garden, admiring nature will be a daily offering, through the provision of lush Asian tropical sky gardens or sky patios throughout the towers. These open spaces will be filled with foliage, charming landscape and a mesmerizing view of the skyline.

The Sky Patio has been simulated in one section of the marketing office, complete with an expected view of the skyline. The charming patio features flowering plant varieties that will soon be very familiar for all Tivoli Garden residents, since their names will be carried by the residential towers: Bauhinia, Eugenia, Heliconia, Caballero, Hibiscus and Iris. There are also benches within the landscaped plaza, so that residents can sit leisurely and enjoy the open spaces with the calming views in their own sky-high garden.

Oneness with nature

"We held this event to show Tivoli Garden's oneness with nature," said DMCI Homes managing director Alfredo Austria. "The impressive artworks complement the artistry we came up with for the concept and design of Tivoli Garden, as a unique vertical development that is devoted to providing residents an invigorating garden community where they can savor daily living."

Management committee members of DMCI Homes were also present to join the ceremonies. Among them were engineer Elmer Civil, Adam Trinidad, May Precila and Flor Ofrencio.

The doors of Tivoli Garden marketing office are now open for visits. The DMCI Homes sales team is more than willing to guide visitors about this project. Currently on display at the showroom are the two-bedroom (Asian Contemporary) and three-bedroom (Casual Elegance) units. For inquiries on Tivoli Garden and other DMCI projects, please call 888-3333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com.

Developing style and practicality for the modern home

THE RESURGENCE OF REAL ESTATE development in the country, especially in the condo-living sector, has produced a boon of property options for new home seekers and savvy property investors.

And in the middle of this bustling industry is the young and dynamic firm known as TKRL Realty and Development Corp., which is currently making a name for itself as a spin-off firm from its sister company Antel Land Holdings Inc.

TKRL has carved its own niche as a purveyor of mid-rise, mixed-use community development projects that cater to middle-income families.

Merging 2 unique concepts

"At TKRL, we see real estate development as a marriage of style and practicality, where homes are designed around the needs of the family and affordably priced even for young starter families," said Philip Lim, TKRL chief operations officer.

Lim explained that TKRL focused on capturing and merging both style and practicality, using the two concepts as a guide in their two fast-rising development projects—Centropolis Communities in Sucat, Muntinlupa and Tresora Residences in Las Piñas.

"Style is always a key element in making a property more attractive to buyers and future homeowners and it should always be representative of an outlook and character of a modern home," Lim said.

Discovering the TKRL style

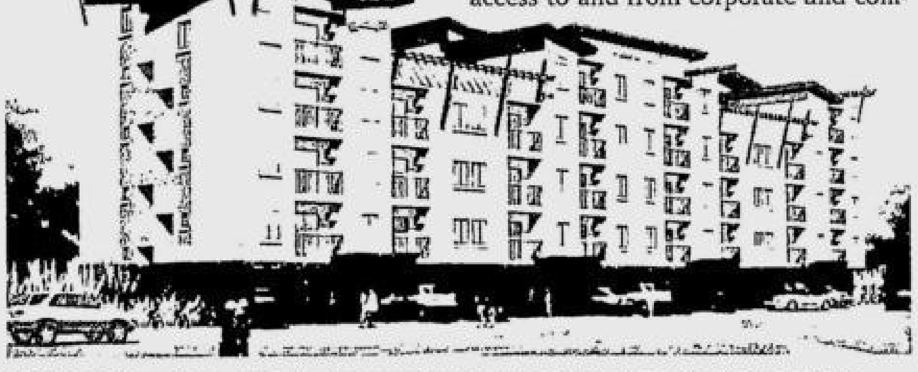
At the one-hectare Centropolis Communities, TKRL envisioned a cosmopolitan enclave structured around four Asian contemporary-inspired residential cluster buildings. The flexibility of the design allowed TKRL to introduce a picturesque town center located in the middle of the property, something that is usually incorporated within a condominium tower of other developers.

The overall effect is that homeowners will get to enjoy amenities like activity areas, commercial establishments, dining venues and even a community swimming pool, which is packaged with a cosmopolitan flair.

With the 1.5-hectare Tresora Residences, TKRL creatively merged the concepts of condo and townhouse living to create a unique style that provides the best of both worlds.

The Asian-tropical design elements of Tresora are enhanced further by the picturesque meditative gardens and gazebo-type oasis of greenery that is perfect for families who enjoy a little playtime under the sun.

The split-level module design of the structure also adds to its distinctive style, allowing only two units per floor, with private stairways per module for that added convenience, privacy and security.



TRESORA'S split-level design is a practical approach that negates the need for bulky elevator shafts since residents need only to climb a few flights of stairs to reach their units.

Developing practicality

But aside from ensuring that its two newest properties exuded a stylish execution, TKRL also injected practical elements that would benefit future residents of Centropolis and Tresora.

In the two TKRL properties, the spaces within the home units are greatly enhanced by the column-free and beamless design used in the construction.

The strategic location of both properties also offers the practicality of easy access to and from corporate and commercial destinations.

Centropolis, which is situated in Sucat, Muntinlupa, affords only a few minutes drive north to reach both the Makati CBD and the Fort Bonifacio corporate center.

Tresora, on the other hand, will soon rise in Las Piñas, with easy access to the Coastal Road, Macapagal Highway and the Airport Road.

Finally, the amenities offered by both properties help ensure that future homeowners need not travel far to enjoy leisure and recreational activities.

True to its vision

At Centropolis, a plethora of commercial establishments and recreational facilities allow families to enjoy shopping, dining and even bonding moments just a short walk from their residential units, while Tresora allows residents to utilize the resort-style swimming facilities without leaving their homes.

All in all, TKRL has remained true to its vision of creating the perfect marriage of style and practicality, proven in fact by its successful development and delivery of the Northeast Building of Centropolis Communities and the upcoming development of Tresora Residences.

Tropical architecture

DESIGN DIMENSION

Isabel Berenguer Asuncion

SOME HOMES HAVE A WAY of leaving an indelible imprint on visitors. I recall the residence that made a strong impact on me as I was growing up. It sat on a steep slope and had a large veranda from which you had panoramic views of the Marikina Valley. Inside, all areas of the house were illuminated by natural light, and the breeze was always moving.

My uncle, who owned that home in Ayala Heights, had a very simple approach to planning: tropical architecture. Far from being some giant *bahay kubo*, his residence was contemporary and designed according to the times. Nevertheless, the home that opened up to the sky fully appreciated our natural weather patterns.

The focal point of the home was a pocket garden right in the middle of his basement level. I recall it had large ferns and other large-leafed plants. The atrium punctured through the roof and let in the sun and rain. From inside the house, one could appreciate the weather changes and felt integrated into the outside albeit protected.

Great challenge

In the tropics, the great challenge in planning lies in dealing with varying weather: heat, rain, humidity and wind. Ironically, traditional Asian tropical architecture does not turn inward to protect itself but instead, opens up to the elements and merges what is inside with the outdoors. Terraces, verandas, gardens and courtyards allow its owners to enjoy the synergy between the inside and the outside, between the man-made and the natural.

Fortunately, many large-scale developments now exhibit a great appreciation of our tropical environment. Malls are beginning to open up and have more outdoor café and activity areas. The Mall of Asia's main activity hub faces the bay and catches the breeze.

Strip Malls—a series of ground floor stores connected by a shaded walkway—are also becoming very popular. Bonifacio High Street for example, not only houses shops and restaurants on the ground floor but its upper floor is home to many offices as well. It allows shoppers to traverse the strip which is almost a kilometer long through shaded walkways that allow them to peer into the shops on one side and at the park on the other side.

The award-winning Greenbelt mall, adapting the concept of the traditional tropical home, has its open spaces and its trees as the main focal point of its development, and the prime source of visual pleasure for its shopping audience.

Unfortunately, homes—especially "Modern Asian" ones—haven't quite adapted to this trend. "Asian" is almost synonymous to tropical, and this is where most of the new modern residences miss out. Windows are designed without the use of overhangs, awnings or ledges as protection from too much sunlight as well as rain.

Overusing glass

In the attempt to emulate western developments, we overuse glass in our designs and locate them in areas that encourage the absorption of sunlight and heat. Our gravest sin though, is not allowing this heat to escape and by doing so, we create unlivable furnaces rather than tropical homes.

The lack of permanent openings traps the breezes that need to be regulated and released through cross-ventilation. I experience that very basic principle in my own bedroom. When I do not have the air-conditioner running and have only one widow open, the heat naturally builds up.

Opening another window in the opposite wall quickly allows fresh air in and allows the hot air to dissipate. I still find wonder in the simplicity of that principle as the room temperature drops dramatically and almost instantly liberates me from so much discomfort.

Therein lies the magic of my uncle's home. His atrium allowed all the heat to vent, and the breezes to cross. Very effective applications of very, very basic principles for the tropics. Ironically, it is when we integrate the inside and the outside, that we create the most livable habitat for ourselves.

EACH residence at Tierra del Sueño offers a comfortable retreat at day's end.

THE 12-HECTARE Sienna Villas offers an array of charming townhomes in Caloocan City.

Camella Homes dominates fast developing northern metropolis

IN THE PAST 30 YEARS, CAMELla Homes & Communities has built a legacy of developing cost-efficient, high-quality residences for over 150,000 Filipino families across Metro Manila, and reaching as far as Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. As the most preferred real estate property developer of Filipinos, Camella, also a member of the country's largest home builder, Vista Land, now dominates the rapidly progressing northern part of Metro Manila with its growing roster of master-planned communities—Grande Vita, Siena Villas, Nova Romania, El Paseo and Tierra del Sueño.

North of Manila boasts of an idyllic suburban setting which remains unperturbed in spite of fast urbanization and industrial developments in the area. Its strategic location also makes it a gateway to and from major thoroughfares around Metro Manila.

Residential living options

Along with the already viable location, Camella further develops the northern face of the metropolis by presenting a collection of residential living options in which to raise families:

- **Grande Vita.** The 20-hectare enclave takes inspiration from Mediterranean-style homes which evoke the feeling of living in a quaint Italian village. There are over 350 new lots available for sale at Grande Vita. The model home currently offered is Alejandra, with a floor area of 31 sq m on an 80-sq-m lot has two bedrooms, provision for a loft and a toilet and bath. Grande Vita is located on Bagumbong Road in Valenzuela City, which is just right after Novaliches.
- **Siena Villas.** An Italian-inspired exclusive community with a land area of more than 12 hectares, Siena Villa grants independent individuals and beginning families a practical yet desirable residence. Siena Villa is composed of carefully laid-out townhomes to ensure the privacy of its residents.

TIERRA del Sueño boasts homes with warm hues, maximized living spaces and a cozy ambiance.

Maximizing space for comfortable living configurations, the Florentina model has a floor area of 55 sq m on a 63-sq-m lot comes with three bedrooms and a toilet and bath. The community is located on Bagumbong Road in Valenzuela City, which is adjacent to the city of Caloocan.

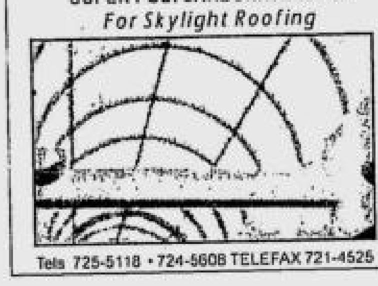
- **Nova Romania.** An 18-hectare prime residential development, Nova Romania is a Mediterranean-inspired community comprised of single-detached homes. Future residents can live in practical luxury with its selection of full two-story home models: Bellita, with a floor area of 50 sq m on an 80-sq-m lot; Carmela, with a floor area of 64 sq m on an 80-sq-m lot; and Drina, with a floor area of 81 sq m on a 99-sq-m lot. Nova Romania is located on Deparo Road in Novaliches, which is right in the heart of Caloocan City, making it accessible from the major cities of Manila and Quezon City.
- **El Paseo.** The recently opened 10-hectare community boasts of charming split-level homes surrounded by tall palm trees and lush landscaping. Future residents can choose from the two model homes currently offered: Carmela, with a floor area of 64 sq m on an 88-sq-m lot; and Drina, with a floor area of 81 sq m on a 99-sq-m lot. Located in Novaliches City, El Paseo is near SM Novaliches and top educational institutions like Ateneo and UP.
- **Tierra del Sueño.** The 24-hectare Spanish-inspired enclave is among the most exclusive developments in the vicinity. Tierra de Sueño presents a collection of models: Alejandra, Bellita and Carmela with floor areas ranging from 31 to 64 sq m on an 80-sq-m lot. Lots only packages, each with a 110-sq-m area, are also available. Prices range from P750,000 to P1.6 million. Inspired by the market's great reception, it recently opened its third phase, Trails of Tierra de Sueño. Located in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, the development is just a few minutes away from SM Fairview and Robinsons Fairview and easily accessible via Commonwealth Avenue and the Quirino-Lagro Road.

One-stop destination

Northern metropolis is fast becoming a one-stop destination for business and relaxation with the area's existing commercial establishments like SM Fairview, Robinson's Mall and Fairview Center Mall; available enterprises offering various services for the convenience of its residents; and the continuous construction of new developments.

A good selection of prime educational institutions is in the locale for your choosing. The area also has reputable hospitals for your medical needs. Grande Vita, Sienna Villa and Nova Romania can be easily reached through public or private transport via the Susano-Camarin-Deparo-Zabarte Road, Commonwealth Avenue, and other major road networks.

The development of Grande Vita, Sienna Villa, Nova Romania, El Paseo and Tierra del Sueño in the northern part of the metropolis is a testament to Camella's aspiration to improve residential options across the country for the hard-working Filipino family.



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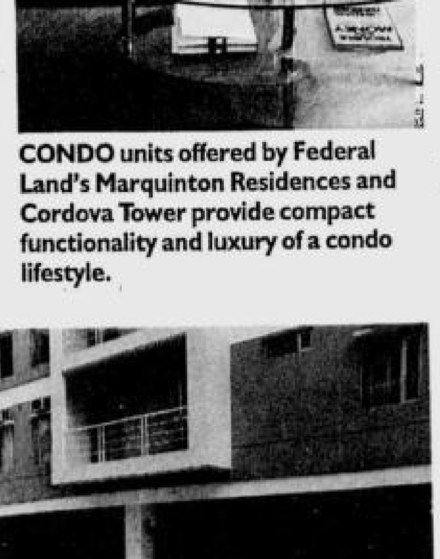
Federal Land makes a home in a city likened to Singapore

FOR 35 YEARS, FEDERAL LAND has proven that it can discover no limits with an excellent track record not just in building structures but in creating communities. It is with this foresight for rich communities that Federal Land pioneered the creation of a residential condominium in one of the most progressive cities in the country, Marikina City.

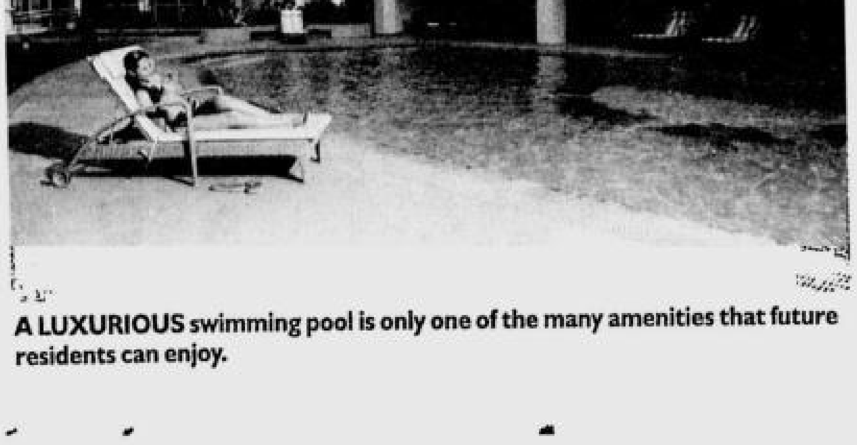
Hailed as the Little Singapore of the Philippines, Marikina City boasts of efficient government service, cleanliness and overall rapid progress. And now with the rise of Federal Land's Marquinton Residences—the first condominium project in Marikina—this admirable city promises an even more exciting lifestyle for its residents.

Condo lifestyle

Marquinton Residences is a 17-hectare masterplanned development that intends to revolutionize the meaning of "home" for Marikina residents. Nestled in the heart of the metropolis' tranquil valley, Marquinton Residences offers residents the experience of living a cosmopolitan life minus the stressful and hectic lifestyle common in other cities.



CONDO units offered by Federal Land's Marquinton Residences and Cordova Tower provide compact functionality and luxury of a condo lifestyle.



A LUXURIOUS swimming pool is only one of the many amenities that future residents can enjoy.

Welcoming Marikeños to a condominium lifestyle are Barcelona and Alicante Towers. The first tower to rise in Marquinton Residences, Barcelona was turned over to residents in March, while Alicante is scheduled for completion in the third quarter of 2007. Soon, these two towers will be joined by a new one: The Cordova Tower.

The Cordova Tower offers the independent lifestyle to its residents. More than the expected comfort and luxury of a condominium lifestyle, it also offers functionality with its compact and easy-to-manage units. Above all, it offers affordable price and easy payment terms that perfectly suits the needs of college students, young urban professionals and newlyweds starting a life of their own.

Accessible

Marquinton Residences is accessible via public transport and is a mere walking distance to hospitals, the Marikina Sports Center, public market, the Marikina City Hall and other commercial establishments. It is also a few minutes away from the historical Sta. Clara church, Ateneo de Manila, Miriam College, UP Diliman and other schools.

Marquinton Residences' self-sustained community is joined by the Bluewave Mall—the first upscale commercial establishment to rise in the city. It boasts of 4 state-of-the-art cinemas, entertainment centers, convenience and specialty stores, and a lineup of popular restaurants and cafés such as Dencio's, Yellow Cab, Shakey's, Max's and Starbucks. Another piece de resistance is Robinsons Supermarket, which opened its doors to local shoppers in April.

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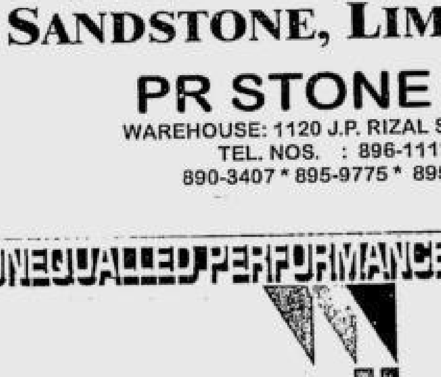

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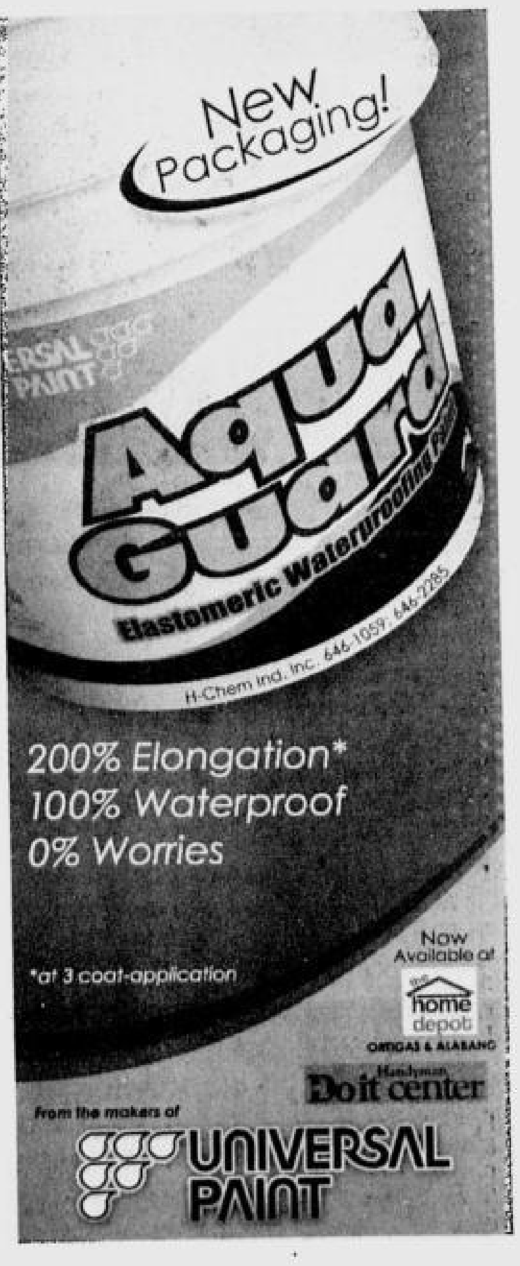
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From the makers of
UNIVERSAL PAINT

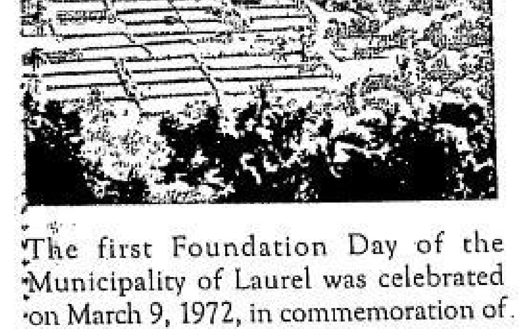
The scenic town of Laurel is in the western part of Mabini in the province of Batangas. Originally, this was an agricultural and farming area for the men, while the womenfolk practiced weaving sinamay and abaca fibers. Customs, traditions and values have remained pretty much the same. [illegible] the elders as shown through [illegible], the musical way of courting a lass known as harana, the traditional way of asking for a woman's hand in marriage by way of the pamamanhikan, the true spirit of cooperation and teamwork by means of bayanihan and the general respect shown to their neighbors.

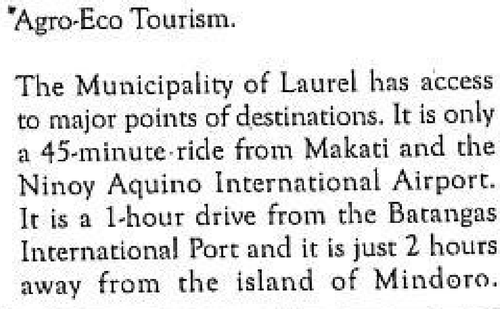
Las Haciendas in Laurel, *Taal's next door neighbor*

Just a few minutes away, **Las Haciendas Evergreen Communities** in Laurel, Batangas is calling. Situated in the lush countryside of Metro Tagaytay, Las Haciendas is your natural wonder, a 342 hectare premium community...mother nature at its purest form.

Even before Spain colonized the country, Laurel, Batangas was already a part of the marine trade route of mainland Asia and other lands farther west. Proof of this is the discovery of high-fired ceramics in the form of the base and a portion of the side of a stoneware jar. The jar, glazed green, yellow and reddish-purple, with the latter glaze identified to be manganese, was a glaze commonly used during the Ceramic Age in the kilns of Fayum, Egypt. Other similar Chinese tradeware were recovered but the local earthenware found were of different varieties. The aesthetic decorations and the various designs could still be identified with the character of the pottery of the Ceramic Age. Towards the end of the Metal Age, pottery of the areas around Batangas were among the more beautiful of the Philippine earthenware.

Being situated just beside Taal Volcano, the original name of the town was Bugain (from the Tagalog word buga, a black cinder formed from flying ashes during the Taal Volcano eruptions). In 1911, the population grew and due to frequent volcanic eruptions, the land became very fertile and agricultural cultivation became the primary source of livelihood. The old folks called the flat area Nayon ng Bayuyungan (derived from the word bayong or a native rice bag woven from buli palm). From 1935 to 1958 the place was known as the Sitio of Saguing. It was then renamed Barrio Duhatan, a name suggested by the people of the town due to the fact that there was a proliferation of duhat trees in the area. In 1969, several neighboring barrios were then merged to finally form the Municipality of Laurel, its current name, in honor of a Batangueño native who eventually became a president of the Philippines, Jose P. Laurel, Sr.

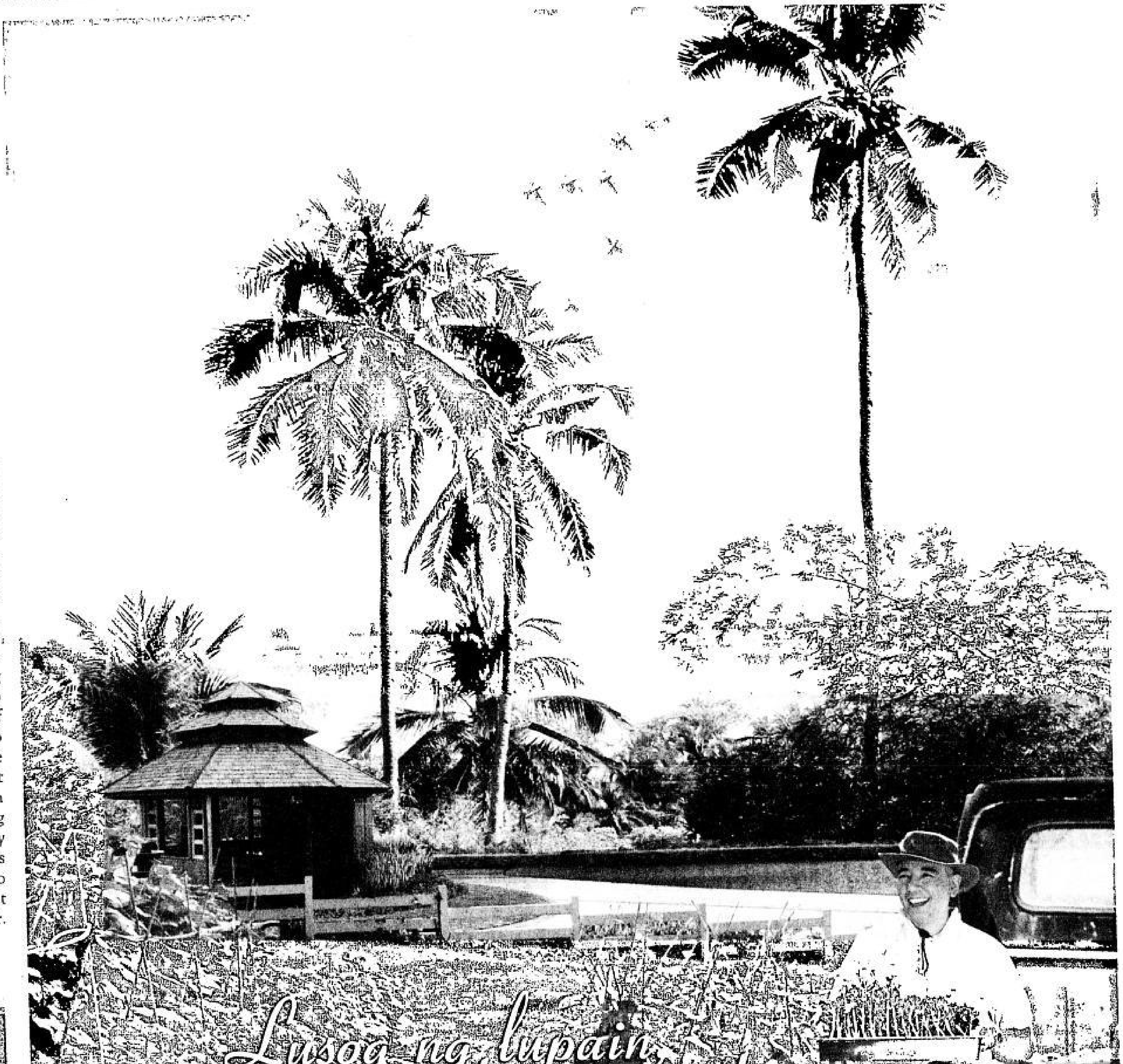




The first Foundation Day of the Municipality of Laurel was celebrated on March 9, 1972, in commemoration of the birth anniversary of its namesake. With a total land area of 7,129 hectares, Laurel was envisioned for Agro-Eco Tourism.

The Municipality of Laurel has access to major points of destinations. It is only a 45-minute ride from Makati and the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. It is a 1-hour drive from the Batangas International Port and it is just 2 hours away from the island of Mindoro.

Laurel, Batangas is also home to Las Haciendas Evergreen Communities, an idyllic spread of lush vegetation, cool breezes, fresh water from the mountains and the perfect setting for your next home.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Location photo shoot at Las Haciendas

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Preserving the values and traditions of typical Filipino towns, Las Haciendas boasts of 342 hectares of 21st century masterplanned, mixed-use nature communities. Las Haciendas Evergreen Communities is located at Laurel, Batangas, Taal's next-door neighbor.

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Editor **Pam Pastor**

electro-Cute

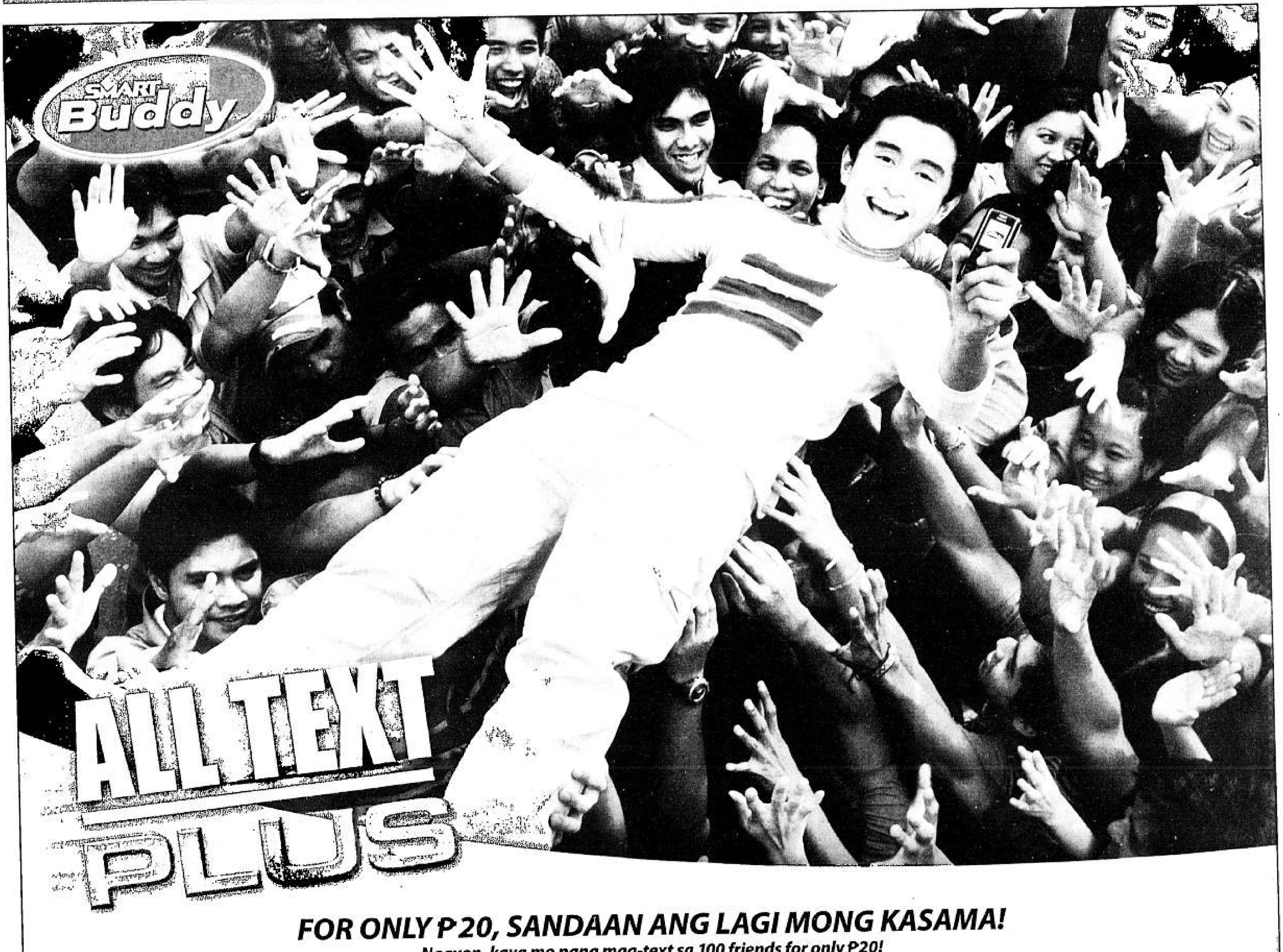
Your Super! guide to **Die Hard 4.0** page E1

Slow down with Tals Diaz page D4

Gino dela Paz and the dead dudes in **Docs** page D1

Meet our Younghusbands page C2

Photography: MARK NICDAO of WildBunch
Styling: MILLET ARZAGA
Grooming: XENG ZULUETA of Shu Uemura
Sittings Editor: DAVID MILAN
Cover stars: JAMES and PHILIP YOUNGHUSBAND wearing L Time Studio



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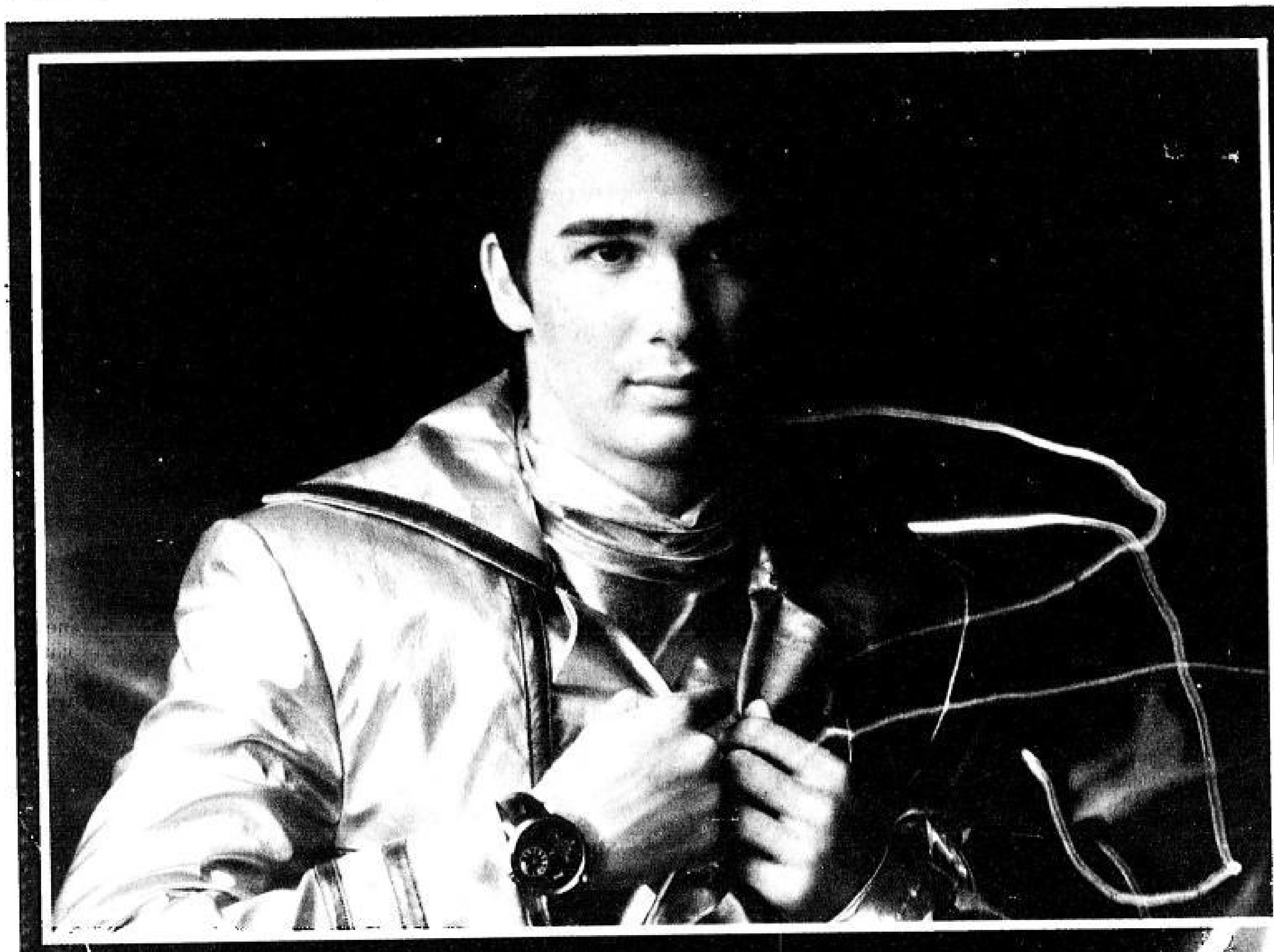
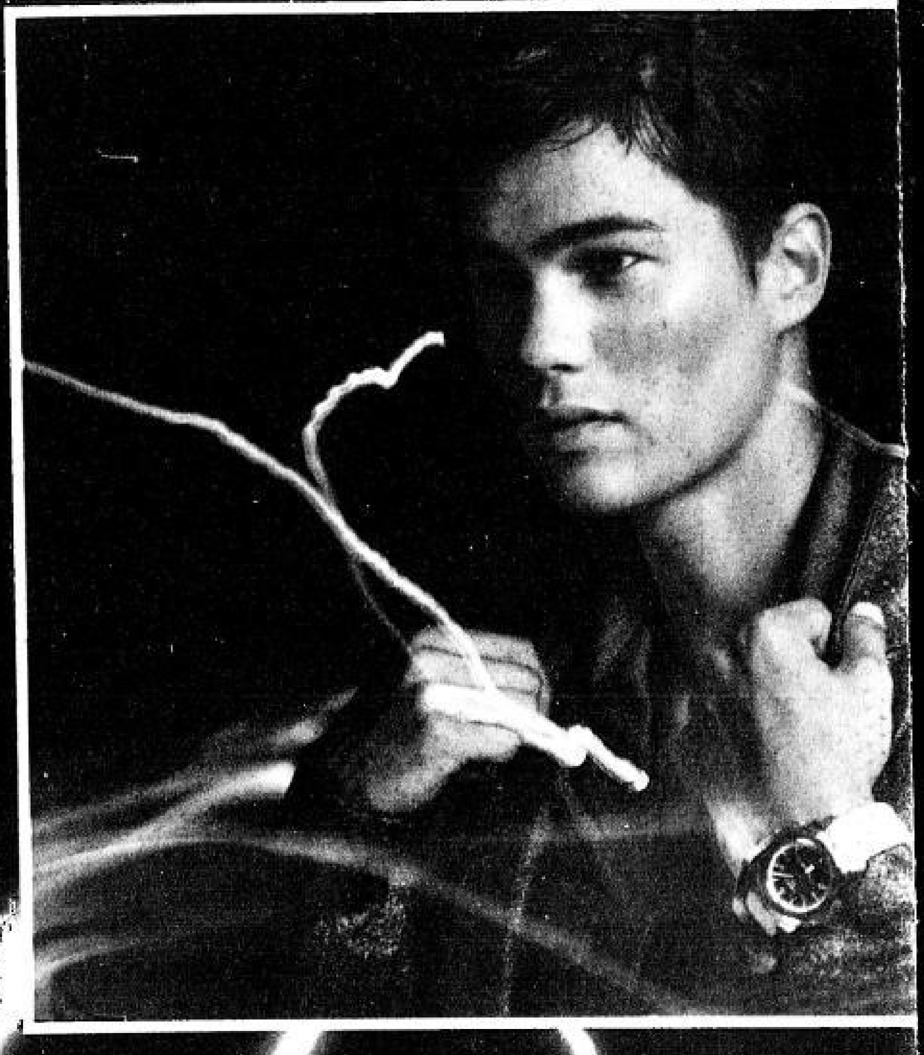




Meet the strike

James and Phil Younghusband are upping the an on the football pitch and the local m

By Tals Diaz

TO THE UNITIATED WHO are curious enough to ask why football is called "the beautiful game," allow me to lay down a few obvious trump cards. David Beckham, Iker Casillas and Kaká. Beautiful game, beautiful guys. Just what is it about this sport that attracts the finest men in the gene pool? Now to add two more for a royal flush: James and Phil Younghusband. They are the young, half-Filipino, half-British luminaries who play for the Philippine National Team. Back in England, 20-year old James plays for Staines Town F.C., while 18-year old younger bro Phil is a pro footballer attached to Chelsea F.C.

Having these two stars in our side of the pitch is probably the best thing to happen in Philippine football history—albeit like giving a man who's dying of thirst bottles of Evian. For in our basketball-manic culture, the sport of football in comparison is about as talked about as cricket or lacrosse. It's still seen as exotic or even upper class. (A strange notion considering all you need is a ball and wide open space, but that's a whole other story.) The presence of James and Phil Younghusband has at least put a well-deserved media spotlight on the sport that has been the siblings' longtime passion.

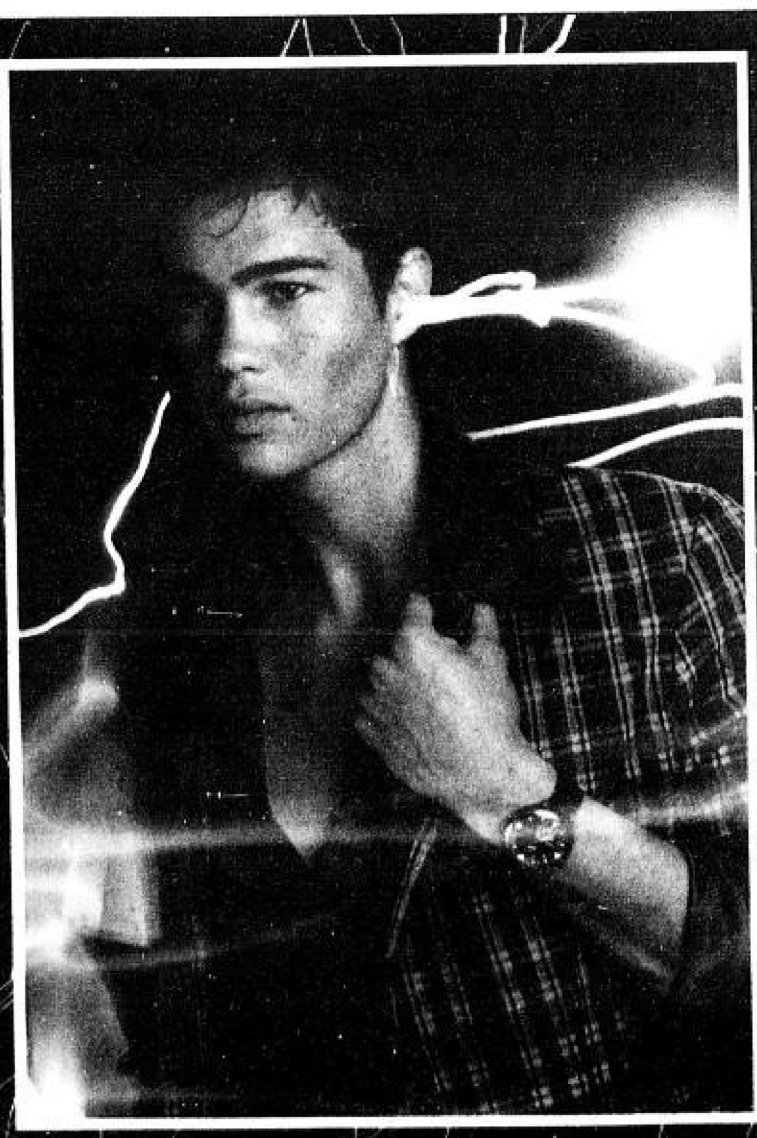
How they ended up in the Philippine National Team lineup is in itself one for the books. Back in 2005, an anonymous gamer clued in the Philippine Football Federation about the Younghusbands' eligibility when he found out about their lineage via a PlayStation 2 game. The two were eventually signed up to the squad that year at the 2005 SEA games. Since their inclusion in the team, the Philippines has even upped its world ranking.

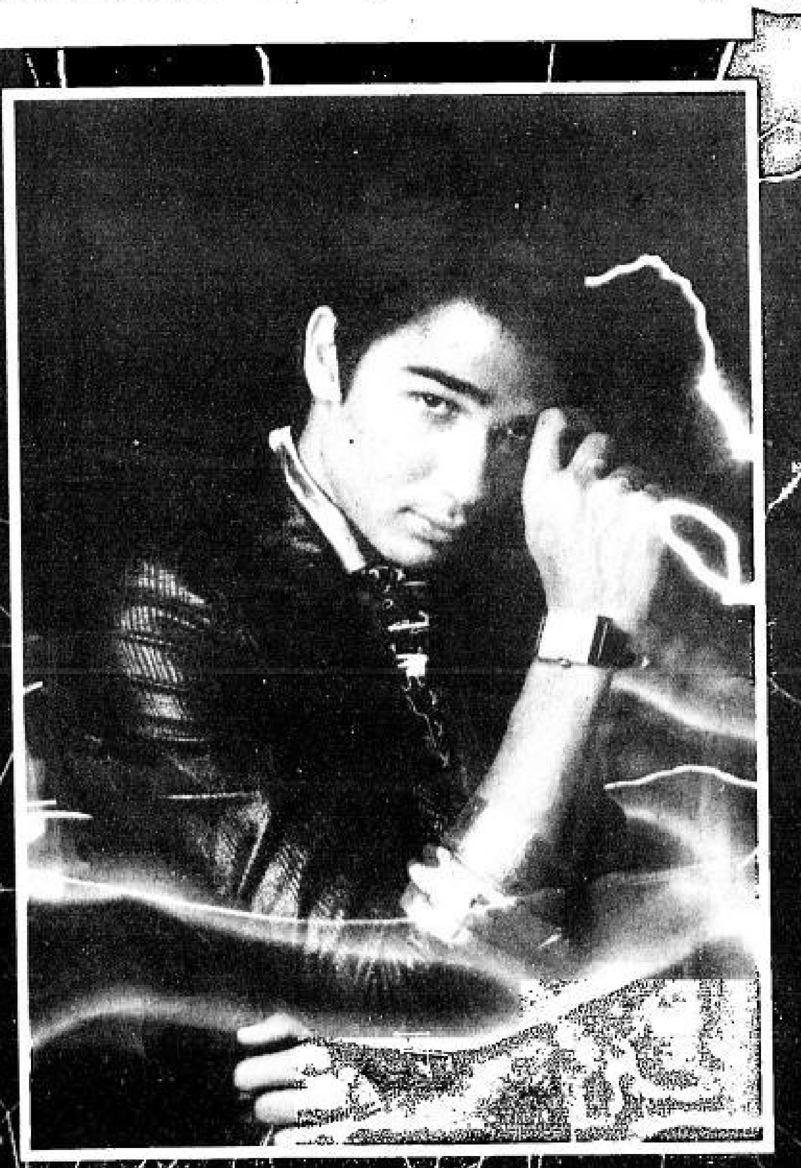
It was inevitable that this good-looking duo would be quickly signed up for modeling stints. James endorsed Italian accessory brand Armando Caruso and Adidas. Recently, he was chosen as the ambassador of Hugo Boss watches, while Phil, who modeled for Tommy Hilfiger, was hooked up with Tissot and Appetime, for No Curfew.

Up close and personal, the boys are total opposites in character. Phil, nicknamed "Ledge" (short for "legend") by his brother, is the outgoing, outrageous, spontaneous and more outspoken one (and reportedly the more girl-crazy) of the two. Conversely, "Cool" James is the quieter, more subdued and allegedly "darker" brother. Phil is messier, while James is the neat freak. In spite of the day-and-night differences, James claims that there is no sibling rivalry. "We're best friends, we always support each other."

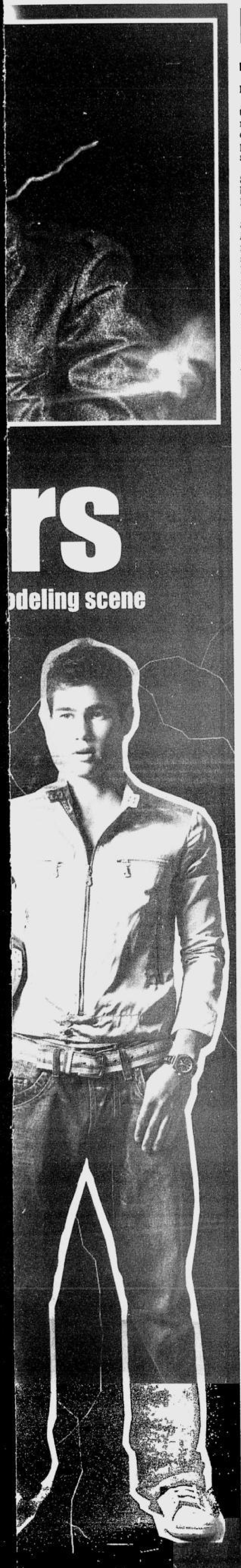
With regards to the lackluster state of Philippine football, James remains very optimistic. "I think with more promotion, it will get better. It will be slow but it can improve. There has to be more support, more money invested, and they should send the teams to different countries more to gain experience and get better." (Someone out there, please, pleeeease listen to what this boy is saying!)

So watch out for these bright and beautiful young things on the pitch or in a glossy mag. Or maybe even in the World Cup—in a parallel universe left to the imagination, where the Philippines actually qualifies, and we're all cheering our lungs out, "Younghusbands! Younghusbands!' Then again, it could just be a multitude of screaming teenage girls proposing marriage. Now that's what you call a fever pitch.





Photography: Mark Nicdao of Wild Bunch; Styling: Millet Arzaga; Grooming: Xeng zulueta of Shu Uemura; Sittings Editor: David Milan
On the cover—James: Hugo Boss watch, Phil: Tissot watch; Inside—1. On James: Hugo Boss watch, On Phil: Appetime watch and M Baretto jacket 2. On James: Hugo Boss watch and Topman tie 3. On James: Hugo Boss watch and Raoul Ramirez jacket and inner, Phil: Tissot watch and Viktor jeans jacket and inner 4. On James: Hugo Boss watch and Springfield jacket, On Phil: Tissot watch and M Barretto jacket



Die Hard downloads

By Pam Pastor

BRUCE WILLIS IS FOLLOWING ME.

I was at Singapore's Communicasia this week to cover Samsung's booth and new range of mobile phones. I wandered around to take photos of the expo's enthusiastic participants when I saw Bruce Willis' face in front of me.

There was a huge image of him at Samsung's booth—it turns out the brand had a tie-up with the movie Die Hard 4.0.

The global release of the film (*See Super!'s full coverage starting on page E1*) will be accompanied by exclusive mobile film content provided by Samsung Electronics for download via the Internet. Samsung will be offering movie fans the opportunity to download the trailer and pictures of the film directly onto their mobile phone. There will also be ringtones, screensavers and a quiz, with Samsung mobile phones waiting to be won.

Samsung's SGH-F500, a multimedia-all-rounder, is also featured in the film. Weighing only 89 grams, this feature-packed wonder is equipped with a swivel display—with telephony on the one side and multimedia applications on the other side. Besides MPEG4, this phone also provides playback of DivX- and WMV files—a first from Samsung. The new mobile phone also guarantees quick Internet access and fast downloads via HSDPA. With its 2.0 megapixel camera it meets all aspirations for mobile multimedia fun. The SGH-F500 is equipped with a TV output with VGA resolution, facilitating television-, beamer- or monitor connection.

DIE HARD
DIE HARD 4.0

Check out Samsung's webpage, for interesting background about Die Hard 4.0. "Movie enthusiasts increasingly consume multimedia content via the mobile phone anywhere, anytime," says Dr. Anthony Park, business development director at Samsung Telecommunications Europe.

He added, "With this campaign, Samsung illustrates the innovative linking of media channels. Movie pleasure is no longer restricted to the cinema. Through its multimedia capabilities, the mobile phone meanwhile plays a significant role in providing new and top-class content."

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Jumbo Pack (S60, M54, L48, XL42)	3 pts
Mega Pack (M84, L72)	4 pts

2. You must collect the corresponding points to be able to get one (1) collectible item:

ITEM	POINTS
Bathroom Mat Pig / Frog / Duck / Tiger	15 pts
Bath Robe Pig / Frog / Duck / Tiger	12 pts
Bathroom Slippers Pig / Frog / Duck / Tiger	8 pts
Bath Sponge Pig / Frog / Duck / Tiger	6 pts

* Only entire wrappers with intact points of ***EQ Dry Baby Diaper with colored cloth-like cover*** will be accepted.
* Entries containing cut-out points will NOT be honored.
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3. Submit the required ***EQ Dry Baby Diaper with colored cloth-like cover*** wrappers together with the complete information written on a piece of paper: sender's name, complete address, telephone and/or mobile phone numbers, baby's name and age, signature of parent/guardian plus the desired premium item/s enclosed in an envelope. *Please include landmarks for hard to find locations.*

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P.O. Box 14280 Pasig City

5. The chosen premium item/s will be delivered FREE of charge by JRS Express to the address submitted by the sender. In the event that the sender is not present during the time of delivery, a member of the sender's household may be asked to sign a proof of delivery and receive the premium item/s in behalf of the sender.

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6. Entries thru mail must be received on or before July 31, 2007 to qualify. Hand delivered entries must be received on or before July 15, 2007 to qualify.

7. Premium items will be delivered until September 30, 2007.

8. You may join the promo as many times as you want.

9. Prizes are not convertible to cash.

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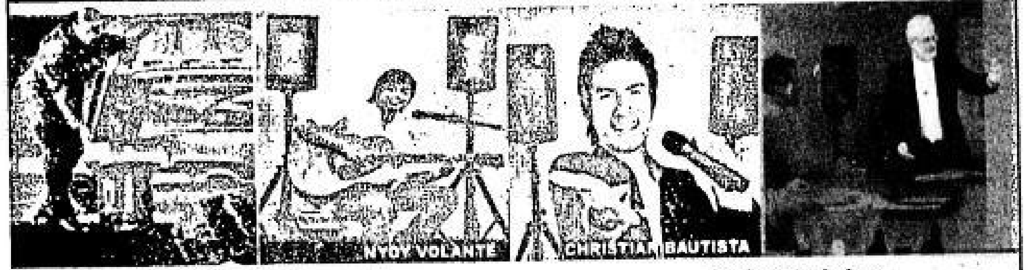

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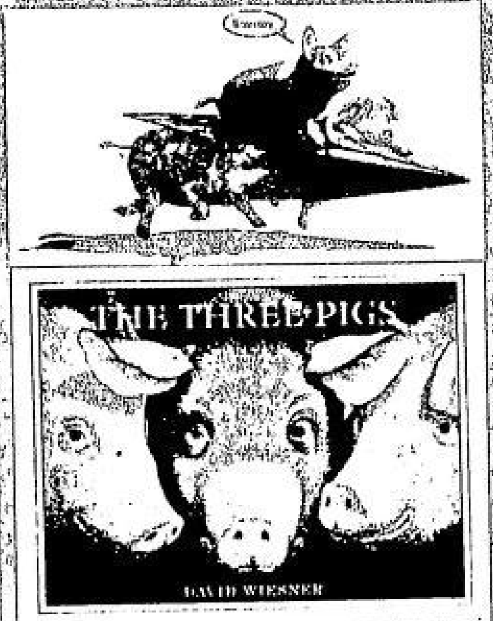
Updates on the battle between Camp Cool and Camp Camp



HYPER FAIRYTALE IMAGINATION. Skewed perspectives merge with the conventional story structure

Foo Fighters

A whole new weird

By James Gabrillo

SUBCULTURES WEREN'T dangerous before. They were just there, in the underground of society, "providing harmless fun," as American journalist Carl Bernstein puts it. But now, subcultures, specifically those of the weird and the dense (two very different things), have managed to elevate their habits to the norms of daily living.

Two days ago, I was eating lunch with new friends from school. We were having lots of clean fun until they found out that I didn't have an iPod.

"But I do know what an iPod is," I said.

For them, it was just bizarre for a twentynothing to not own the gadget. It's just not right, one of them told me.

The whole day, I was trying my best to make out how they've come to an understanding that gadgets equal normality. But you can't blame them, really. I guess the modern game of trend-making and trend-breaking is behind all the transformations in our generation's level of thought.

Hip, hip, hooray

See, things are changing so fast. Activities which we used to treat as customs in our everyday existence are now odd exercises which we refuse to take part in lest we be labeled uncoolio—like wearing leather shoes to school or reading the dailies (front page). What?

It's now hip to be geeky (absolutely no objections on this), to know anything British, and to drop pop references all over the place.

In grade school, there seemed to be a consensus that kids playing badminton were wimps. Now, everyone's playing the game.

Before, it was kind of cool (and fun) to come up with imaginative e-mail IDs like jamwidme999 (You have to understand that I was just 11 years old back then). Now, the classic method was edited to produce the norm that is firstnamedotlastname@gmail.com.

Even the social scene is adjusting to what appears to be a reversal of roles—the bourgeois are going bohemian, and the lower classes are bling-ing it on.

Literature is rumbling with some good and lots of bad postmodern products, most of which are rehashes of classic texts.

Shrek, for example, started a whole new strain of self-referential stories that stirs one to sense that children's books will be never be the same again.

Take David Weisner's award-winning "The Three Pigs." To escape the wolf, the pigs fold a page of their own story into a paper airplane and escape to visit other children's books!

The limit does not exist?

But of course, not all developments are as astonishing as that.

Recently, we've encountered a lot of over-revolutionizing and over-designing—Robin Padilla doing a Memento via Unitel's "Blackout," Norah Jones doing a Wong Kar Wai, Friendster and Multiply accounts doing no justice to some great art with its (problematic?) mix of lay-out properties. Too much, too much!

These are little things that we take for granted, not noticing that they permit big ideologies to dominate us in the long run.

Therefore, folks, for the sake of future generations, we have to grasp that there are things that have to seem weird forever.

At the same time, there should be motions that should eternally remain part of our system. Youth volunteerism demonstrates awesome progress—let's continue promoting it. Singing in the car when you don't even know all the words—what's crazy about that?

But you know what, in the end, it's really all up to you. Do not allow forces to dictate what you think about something. Go with what you enjoy, as long as it's good and harmless. Continue finding fulfillment in your unique interests, and share to others your little discoveries.

You'll be surprised to learn that people will find more and more integrity in you.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2369, Series of 2007.

Live art, love art

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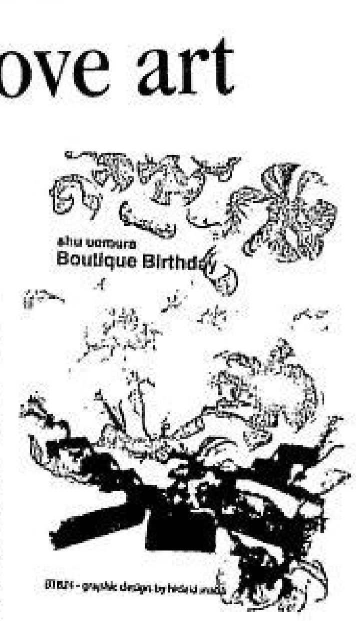
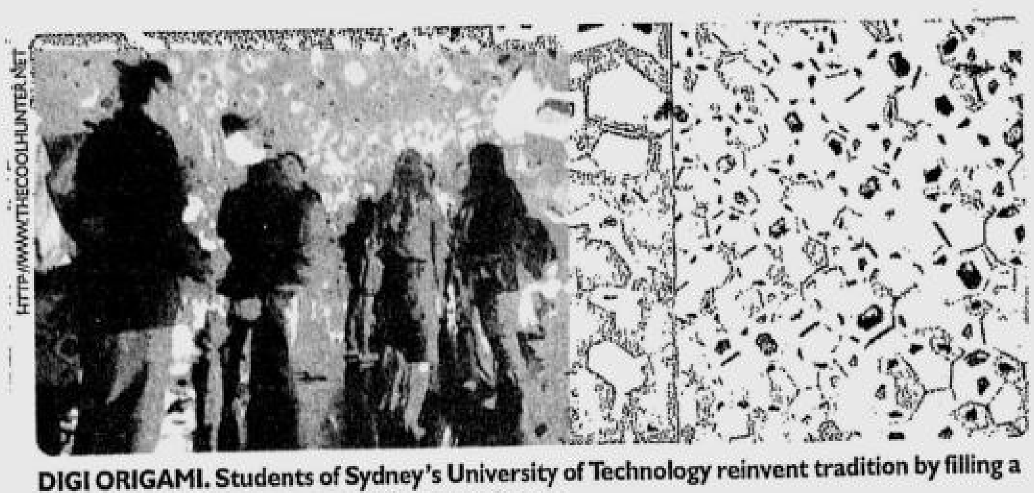
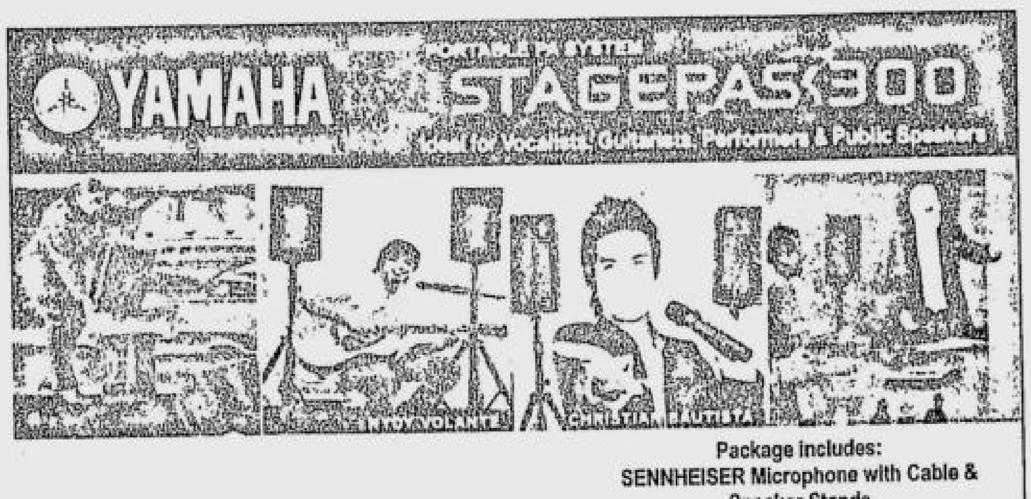
The event will feature products from Motorola, such as the KRZR K3, Shu Uemura's Boutique Birthday 24 collection, and Globe Platinum's all-access passes and exquisite rewards; the event will also highlight the work of sculptor Ovvian Castrillo.

For more information and entry into the competition, log onto http://breakthroughdesign.com.ph





DIGI ORIGAMI. Students of Sydney's University of Technology reinvent tradition by filling a room with neon-lighted geometric paper shapes.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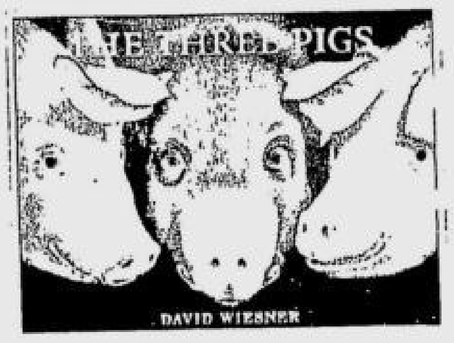

HYPER FAIRYTALE IMAGINATION. Skewed perspectives merge with the conventional story structure

Foo Fighters

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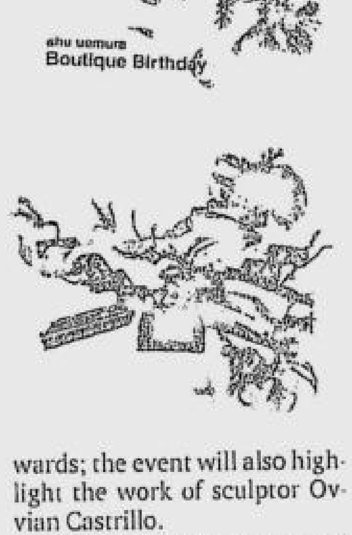

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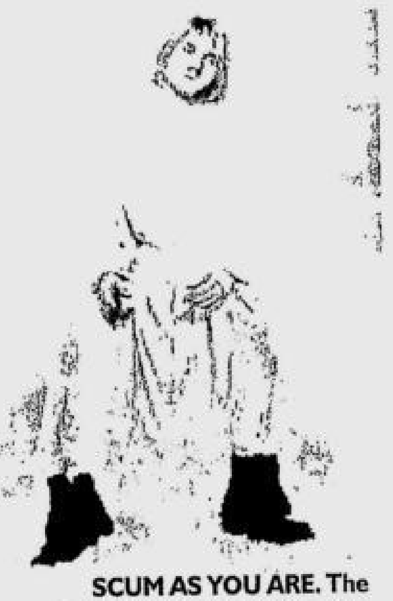
RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Super

Dead dudes in Docs



SCUM AS YOU ARE. The controversial Dr. Martens ad which shows the late Kurt Cobain as an angel/corporate whore

Even in the afterlife, pop culture icons are selling us stuff we don't particularly need, want, or whatever. Say whut?

Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz

COURTNEY LOVE DIDN'T THINK it was cute or clever.

She was reportedly more than pissed off when a grunge-era shoe company used her deceased hubby's image in a new ad campaign without her permission. The footwear manufacturer in question is Doc Martens and the long-dead rock star is, of course, Kurt Cobain.

Dr. Martens CEO, David Suddens, has apologized to the troubled grunge-era widow—or Yoko Ono, depending on where you're coming from—and copped out by saying they made a mistake by repurposing deceased rock icons to hawk their AirWair line. Aside from the late Nirvana frontman, who was portrayed as a semi-grimy angel, the print/poster campaign also featured The Clash's Joe Strummer, The Sex Pistols' Sid Vicious, and The Ramones star, Joey Ramone. All of them are now undead corporate whores.

Debase them, please

As memories got trashed and things went boom, Suddens had this to say to the media: "We never should have done that. It's not a campaign we want to be associated with. As a consequence, Dr. Martens has terminated its relationship with ad agency Saatchi & Saatchi London." Oh snap.

In its defense, Saatchi & Saatchi London writer, Andrew Petch, previously explained

DEAD/ D3

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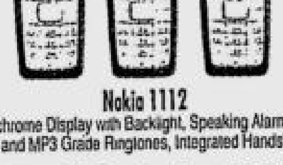

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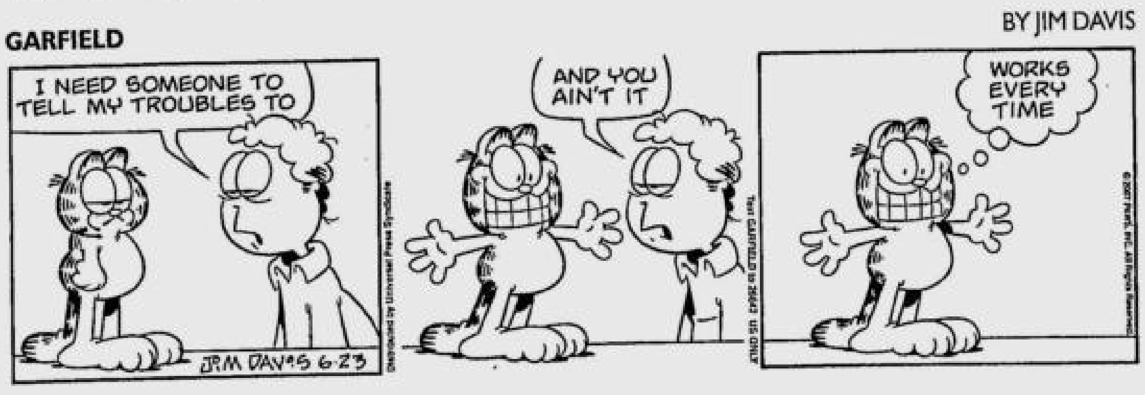
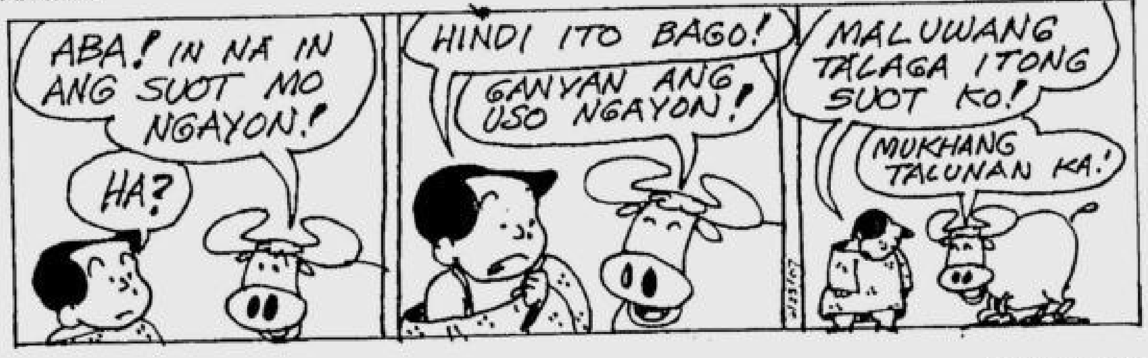
BY JIM DAVIS


I NEED SOMEONE TO TELL MY TROUBLES TO
AND YOU AIN'T IT
WORKS EVERY TIME
JIM DAVIS 6-23

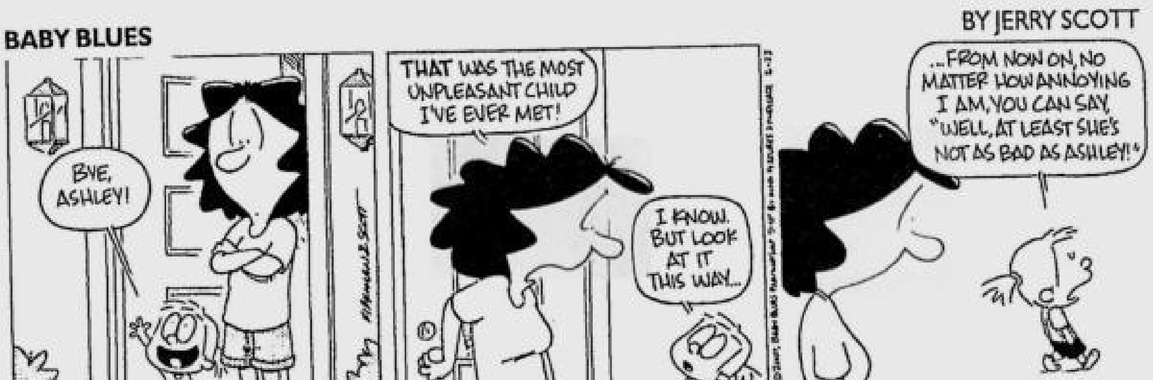
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ABA! IN NA IN ANG SUOT MO NGAYON!
HA?
HINDI ITO BAGO!
GANYAN ANG USO NGAYON!
MALUWANG TALAGA ITONG SUOT KO!
MUKHANG TALUNAN KA.!

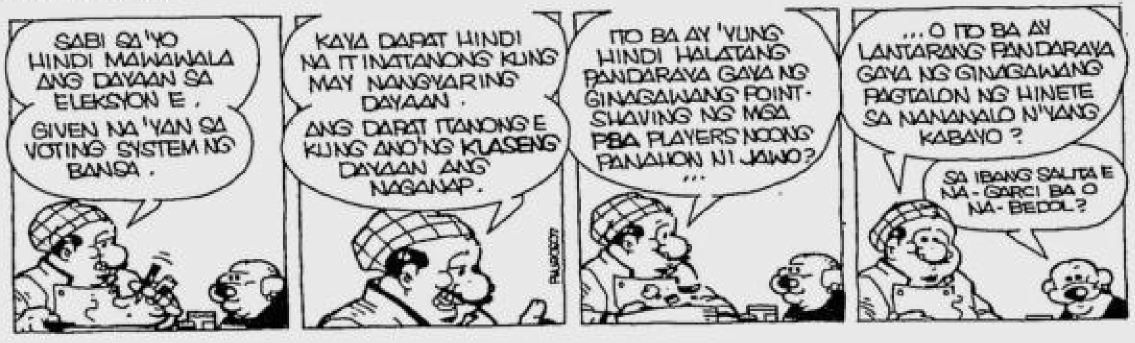
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


BYE, ASHLEY!
THAT WAS THE MOST UNPLEASANT CHILD I'VE EVER MET!
I KNOW. BUT LOOK AT IT THIS WAY...
...FROM NOW ON, NO MATTER HOW ANNOYING I AM, YOU CAN SAY, "WELL, AT LEAST SHE'S NOT AS BAD AS ASHLEY!"

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR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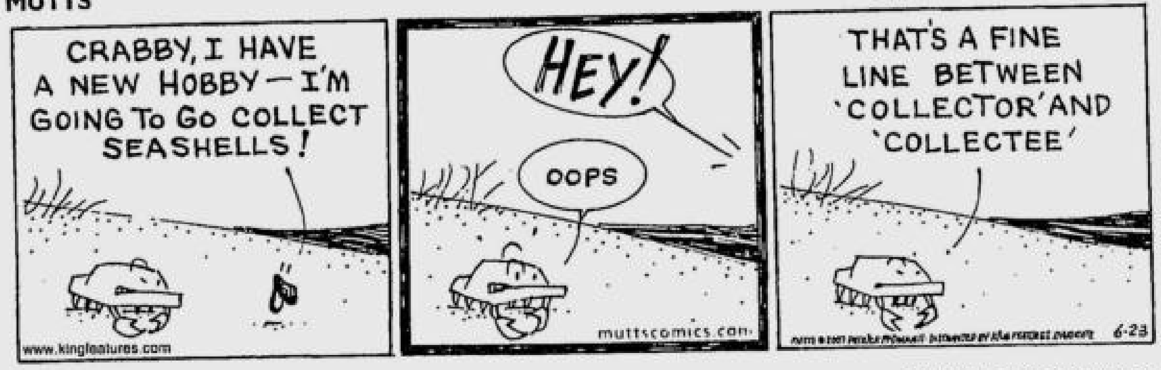
GIVEN NA 'YAN SA VOTING SYSTEM NG BANSA.
KAYA DAPAT HINDI NA ITINATANONG KUNG MAY NANGYARING DAYAAN.
ANG DAPAT ITANONG E KUNG ANO'NG KLASENG DAYAAN ANG NAGANAP.
ITO BA AY 'YUNG HINDI HALATANG PANDARAYA GAYA NG GINAGAWANG POINT-SHAVING NG MGA PBA PLAYERS NOONG PANAHON NI JAWO? ...
...O ITO BA AY LANTARANG PANDARAYA GAYA NG GINAGAWANG PAGTALON NG HINETE SA NANANALO N'YANG KABAYO?
SA IBANG SALITA E NA-GARCI BA O NA-BEDOL?

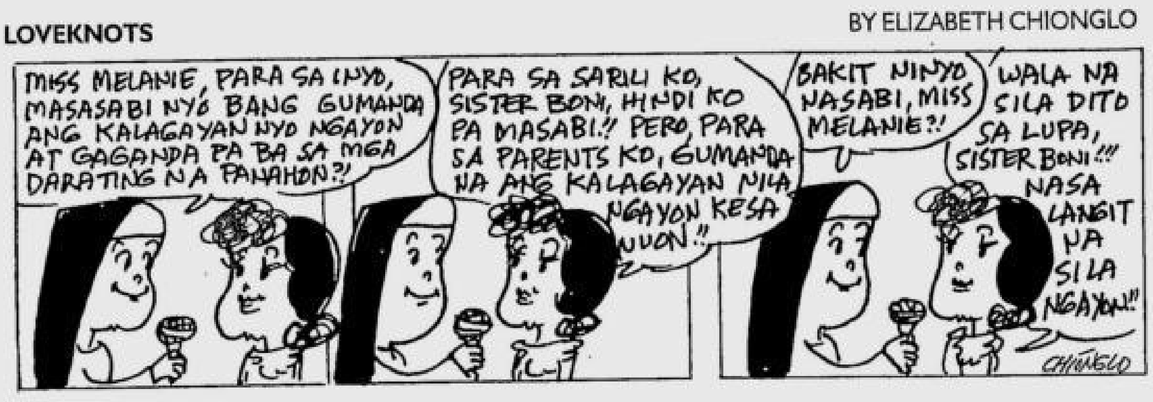
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


CRABBY, I HAVE A NEW HOBBY — I'M GOING To Go COLLECT SEASHELLS!
HEY!
OOPS
THAT'S A FINE LINE BETWEEN 'COLLECTOR' AND 'COLLECTEE'
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
6-23

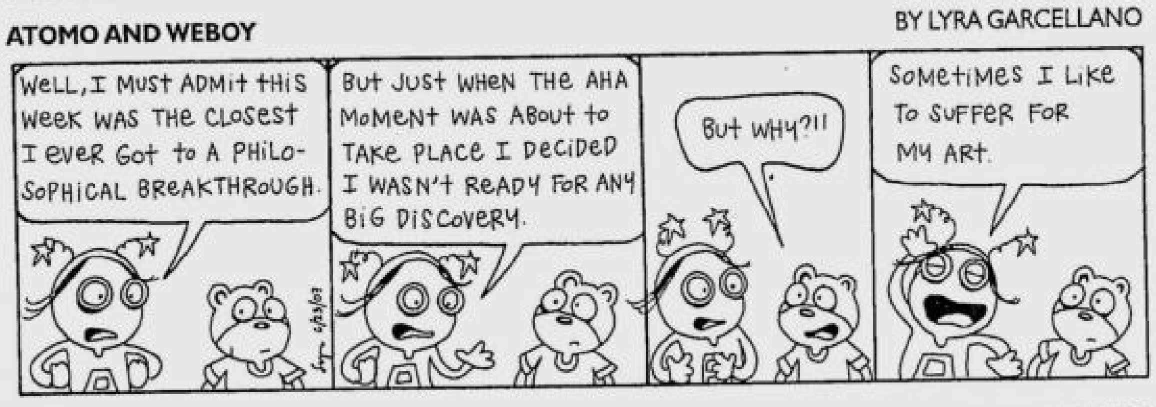
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MISS MELANIE, PARA SA INYO, MASASABI NYO BANG GUMANDA ANG KALAGAYAN NYO NGAYON AT GAGANDA PA BA SA MGA DARATING NA PANAHON?!
PARA SA SARILI KO, SISTER BONI, HINDI KO PA MASABI.!! PERO, PARA SA PARENTS KO, GUMANDA NA ANG KALAGAYAN NILA NGAYON KESA NOON.!!
BAKIT NINYO NASABI, MISS MELANIE?!
WALA NA SILA DITO SA LUPA, SISTER BONI!!! NASA LANGIT NA SILA NGAYON!!
CHIONGLO

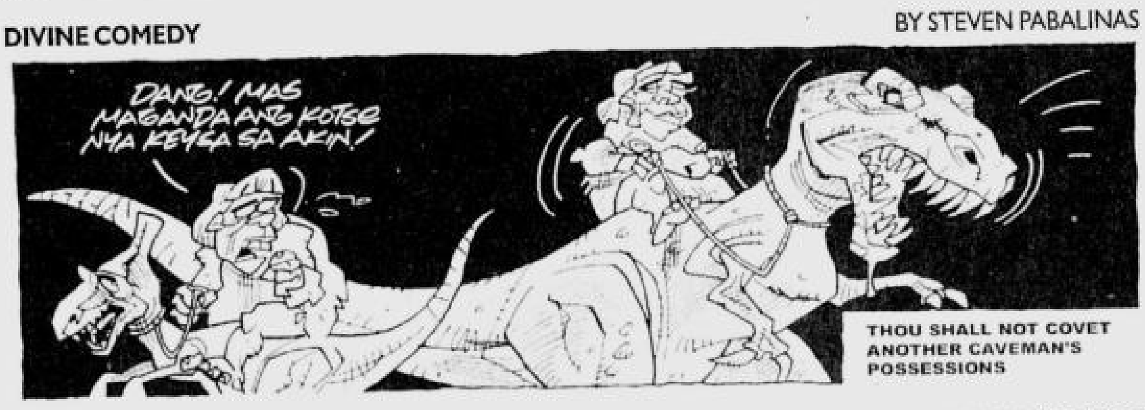
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


WeLL, I MUST ADMIT THIS WeeK WAS THE CLOSEST I eveR GOT TO A PHILOSOPHICAL BReAKTHROUGH.
But JUST WHeN THe AHA MoMeNT WAS ABOUT TO TAKe PLACe I DeCIDeD I WASN'T ReADY FoR ANY BIG DISCOVeRY.
But WHY?!!
SoMeTIMeS I LIKe To SUFFeR FoR MY ART.

DIVINE COMEDY

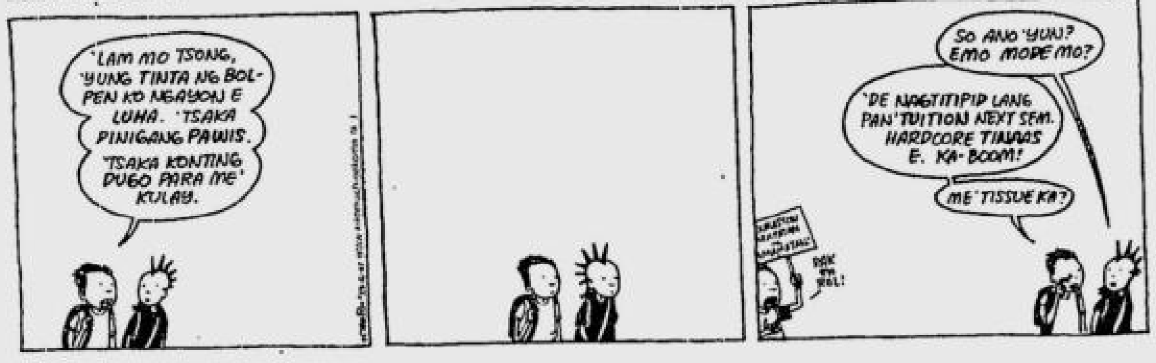
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


DANG! MAS MAGANDA ANG KOTSE NYA KEYSA SA AKIN!

THOU SHALL NOT COVET ANOTHER CAVEMAN'S POSSESSIONS

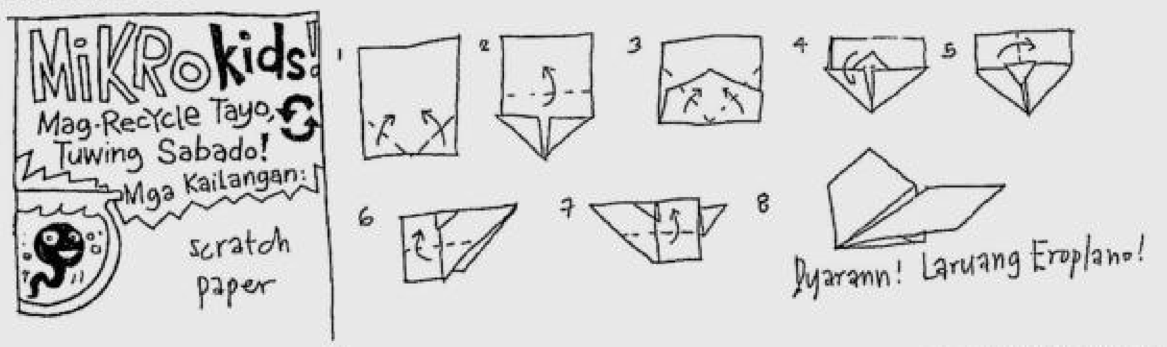
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM MO TSONG, 'YUNG TINTA NG BOLPEN KO NGAYON E LUHA. 'TSAKA PINIGANG PAWIS. 'TSAKA KONTING DUGO PARA ME' KULAY.
SO ANO 'YUN? EMO MODE MO?
'DE NAGTITIPID LANG PAN'TUITION NEXT SEM. HARDCORE TIPIRAN E. KA-BOOM!
ME' TISSUE KA?

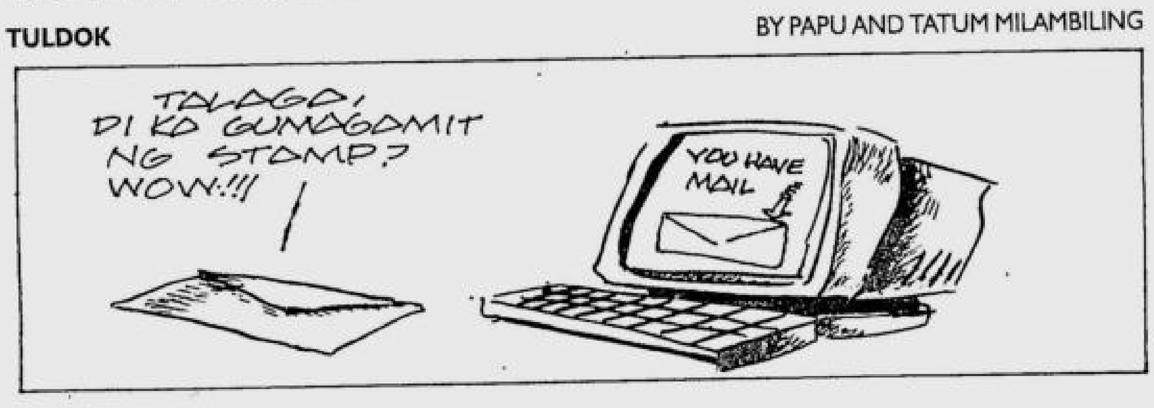
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRokids!
Mag-Recycle Tayo, Tuwing Sabado!
Mga Kailangan:
scratch paper
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
Dyarann! Laruang Eroplano!

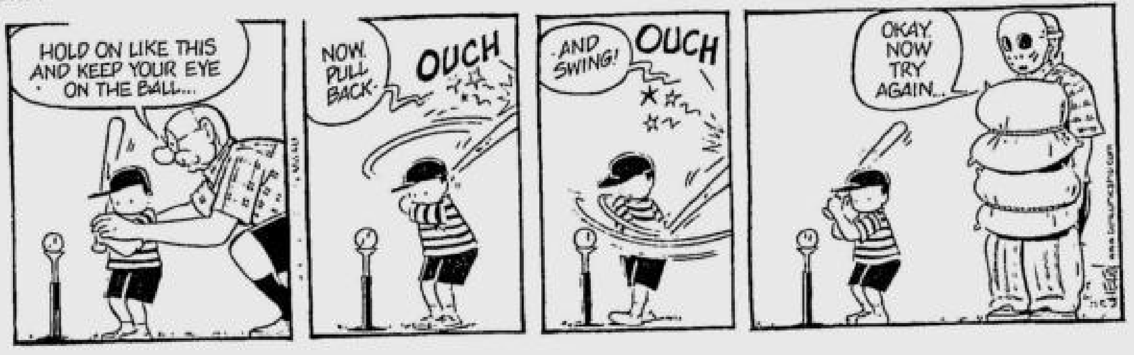
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

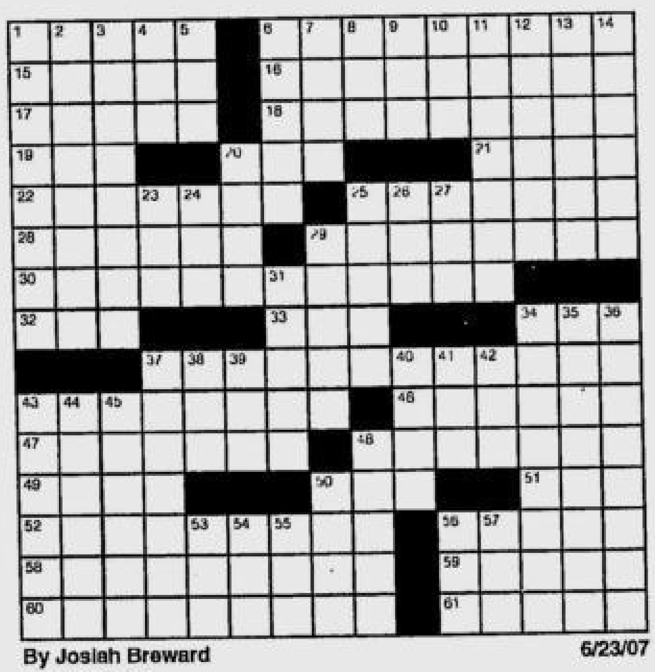

TALAGA, DI KO GUMAGAMIT NG STAMP? WOW!!!
YOU HAVE MAIL

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


HOLD ON LIKE THIS AND KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL...
NOW. PULL BACK.
OUCH
AND SWING!
OUCH
OKAY. NOW TRY AGAIN...

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Josiah Breward
Scranton, PA

6/23/07

ACROSS

1 Birds' crops
6 In the bag
15 Team race
16 Pelican State
17 Sharif and Epps
18 Scolds sharply
19 '60s war zone
20 Howard or Wood
21 Lukas of "Witness"
22 Israel's parliament
25 Burnt offering
28 Bombay resident
29 Yet to be classified
30 Recipe measures
32 Asner and Ames
33 Carnival city
34 Spoil
37 Address an imaginary person
43 Parts of ignition systems
46 Commits to memory
47 City on the Rhone
48 Filthy place
49 Pass out the cards
50 Writer Kesey
51 Egg: pref.
52 Lily Tomlin's operator
56 Producer Spelling
58 Not broken in
59 Intestinal obstruction
60 Owns
61 Mother in Madrid

DOWN

1 Walter of TV news
2 Posted new troops
3 Shaded walkways
4 Armed conflict
5 Method: abbr.
6 Apportion
7 Temporary grant
8 Abner's partner
9 Bro's sis
10 NASA partner
11 Hopeful ones
12 Floating on water
13 Constrained state
14 Skipped a turn
20 City near Lake Tahoe
23 Fam. member
24 Dolt
25 Guaranteed to get
26 Tahlequah, OK school
27 Row's opp.
29 Component parts
31 Director Welles
34 Reflected
35 French singer Charles
36 Reply
37 Fishermen
38 Corral
39 Of the ear
40 Buck heroine
41 Family dog
42 Pillbox or porkpie
43 Invented
44 Entrance to Hades
45 Titans
48 Marsh grasses
50 Leg joint
53 Manuscript encl.
54 "__ the season to be jolly..."
55 Election victors
56 Objective
57 Pie __ mode

Friday's Puzzle Solved

A	F	T	S		H	A	R	S	H		O	G	L	E
B	L	U	E		E	L	I	H	U		P	A	I	R
C	E	N	T	R	A	L	C	H	E	A	T	I	N	G
S	E	A	H	O	R	S	E			P	I	N	T	O
				T	O	E		P	A	L	O			
C	L	A	W	O	F	T	H	E	J	U	N	G	L	E
R	A	D	A	R			A	S	A	S		L	I	P
A	N	O	N		F	A	V	O	R		P	I	N	S
S	A	P		S	U	M	O			D	I	N	G	O
H	I	T	S	C	R	O	C	K	B	O	T	T	O	M
			C	A	S	K		U	A	R				
A	W	F	U	L			S	C	R	I	P	T	E	D
W	H	E	R	E	I	S	T	H	E	C	L	O	V	E
L	I	A	R		S	T	E	E	L		O	T	I	S
S	P	R	Y		T	A	W	N	Y		Y	O	L	K

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6/23/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Your romantic nature can sometimes overpower your life. You live for love. People are attracted to you because they sense that you're emotionally vibrant and alive. You bring magic to peoples' lives. You're interested in (and very much a part of) society around you. Yet you are also a practical, productive person. This year, your focus will be on close friendships and partners.

Birthdate of: Frances McDormand, actress; LaDainian Tomlinson, football running back; Vint Cerf, computer scientist.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Private, secret issues you have in your life could become more important now. You might be forced to cover old ground once again or rehash old issues.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might decide to change your mind about some important goals you have. You're wondering whether they need to be modified or even completely changed. It's up to you.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You like your independence, and you need a lot of freedom. But now you're starting to wonder if you have come too far too fast. Maybe you need to rethink something.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Unexpected opportunities connected to travel, education or publishing are surfacing again. You thought these things were long gone, but apparently not. (Who knew?)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You might have another opportunity to work with the resources or wealth of others. Do what you can while you have the chance. Don't hesitate.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Continue to try to establish your own independence at work or in whatever you do. Your life is slowly moving in a new direction now, and you know this.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Make an effort to stay current with technology and how it impacts your life (even though it's getting more and more difficult to keep up with things).

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Opportunities from the past could reappear now, especially those related to working with children, booking a vacation, sports or anything having to do with romance or the arts. Stay alert for these.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Recent changes to your home scene lead to further changes at this time. You have a chance to put some old ideas back on the drawing board

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Surprising news related to siblings and relatives is possible now. In some way, it might make you feel freer, more liberated and youthful.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might have a chance to boost your earnings if you go back to a previous idea you had about earning money. Why not run it up the flagpole to see if anyone salutes?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your freedom and independence are increasingly important to you. Something happening now simply makes you remember this. (It's good to have a reminder if you need it.)

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

by Dave Green

	9	8	3	4				
			9					8
								6
				6			1	2
3			4		5			7
7	4			2				
1								
6					7			
				5	8	2	3	

Difficulty Level ★★★★

6/23

©2007 Conceptis Puzzles. Dist. by King Features Syndicate, Inc

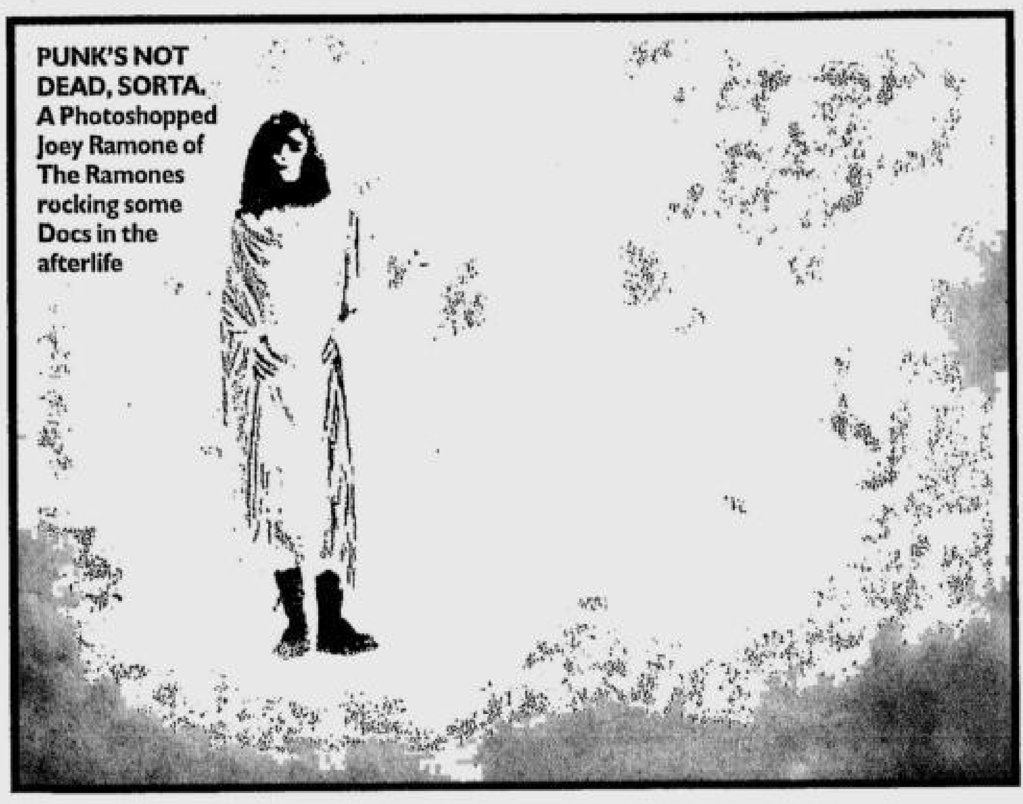
HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

9	7	8	1	6	3	5	2	4
3	1	2	5	9	4	7	8	6
5	4	6	7	2	8	3	9	1
1	9	5	8	4	7	6	3	2
7	8	3	2	5	6	1	4	9
6	2	4	3	1	9	8	7	5
4	3	9	6	8	5	2	1	7
8	6	1	9	7	2	4	5	3
2	5	7	4	3	1	9	6	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★



PUNK'S NOT DEAD, SORTA. A Photoshopped Joey Ramone of The Ramones rocking some Docs in the afterlife

Dead dudes in Docs

From page D1

that they only wanted to show that Dr. Martens boots are made to last. "Showing them still wearing their Docs in heaven dramatized the boots' durability perfectly. And, as images, they feel very iconic," he stated.

Legally, the advertising giant had an agreement with Corbis, supplier of the original pics, for use in the United Kingdom only. Slicked up by photographer Dimitri Daniloff and retoucher Christophe Huet, the resulting ads have been making cameos in blogs since the controversy ratcheted up.

As a trend, as a friend

Despite the good intentions and, like, artsy-ness of it all, Kurt's now-skinny widow still thought it was a bunch of hooey. In fact, she even used the polysyllabic word "despicable." Oh snap again.

According to an unnamed rep, "Courtney had no idea this was taking place and would never have approved it. She thinks it's outrageous that a company is allowed to commercially gain from such a despicable use of her husband's picture."

And all this time I thought it was because she knew that Kurt wore Converse, not Docs. But anyway.

Refusing to headbang quietly

It goes without saying that the peeps in these ads really don't give donkey balls about the hoohah. After all, they're dead. So let's focus on the ones that do.

Members of the blogosphere have refused to headbang quietly to the riffs, calling the whole thing crass, unnecessary, and even sacrilegious. After all, heaven would never open its gates to peeps in steel-toed shoes. But seriously, it's the thought of seeing one's idols this way—as, again, corporate whores—that have most music fans ranting like breathless nymphos. Yeah, those dead legends may have promoted self-destruction as a fashion statement, but what's next for Dr. Martens? Docs-clad corpses in open caskets? Necrophilia chic?

On the other hand, I prefer to take the less dramatic and more chill path. Whether the ads are tacky or witty, the campaign's sheer ohmygod thunder has brought the Doc Martens brand—not to mention, some musicians we may have or have not even heard of—into temporary relevance.

As something that feels like a musty museum piece, something that has spent the last 12-odd years in limbo, Dr. Martens is perfect for the re-picking by our Chucks-saturated generation. If we connect the dots around us—I have spotted everyone lately, from edgy models to trendy Hong Kong kids, posing mournfully with their Docs—we may be in the midst of a steel-toed boot mini-revival.

Speaking of 15 minutes

Don't look now, but the advertising world's retro-referencing tendencies seem to extend beyond departed rockers. Long-flatlined artists have also been commissioned to push a few products.

In the name of selling a shoe, sneaker company Royal Elastics has made Andy Warhol their poster boy. Their press statement declares, "Andy Warhol broke down boundaries and challenged the world to see the familiar from an unexpected perspective. Andy Warhol by Royal Elastics exhibits the same type of boundless energy, creativity, and non-conformist tendencies."

On a slightly more upscale note, Barney's New York greeted the last holiday season with a decidedly Warholian quirkiness as well. "Despite his major art-world standing, Andy had a distinctly frivolous side," asserts PR material from the designer emporium. "He loved spending money. He loved shopping. He designed store advertising and reveled in it. He decorated store windows and proudly signed them! He is, in many ways, a kind of patron saint of American retail. For Andy, stores represented a kind of heaven on earth."

Again, there's stuff about heaven. But really, when it comes to retail, no one can mash up non-conformist creativity and $$$ better than Andy Warhol.

Cha-chinging from the afterlife

To make sure that golden celebs would stay golden-er even after they've croaked, old-schoolers Al Pacino and yup, ex-Beatles widow, Yoko Ono, have pushed for a bill that would protect the famous dead from exploitation.

The Associated Press reports that Pacino wrote to legislators after the estate of Lee Strasberg, the late Marilyn Monroe's acting coach, started writing him. "I feel like one's likeness and image should be protected in some way and not abused or denigrated for the sake of profit," he said. (In case you cared, Marilyn Monroe's estate lost a legal battle over unauthorized images of the silver screen starlet on t-shirts sometime ago.)

If it becomes a law, it would be illegal for a t-shirt or toy maker to use a celebrity's image, name, and voice recordings without consent from their respective estates. The protection could last for up to 70 years after a celebrity has gone tits up.

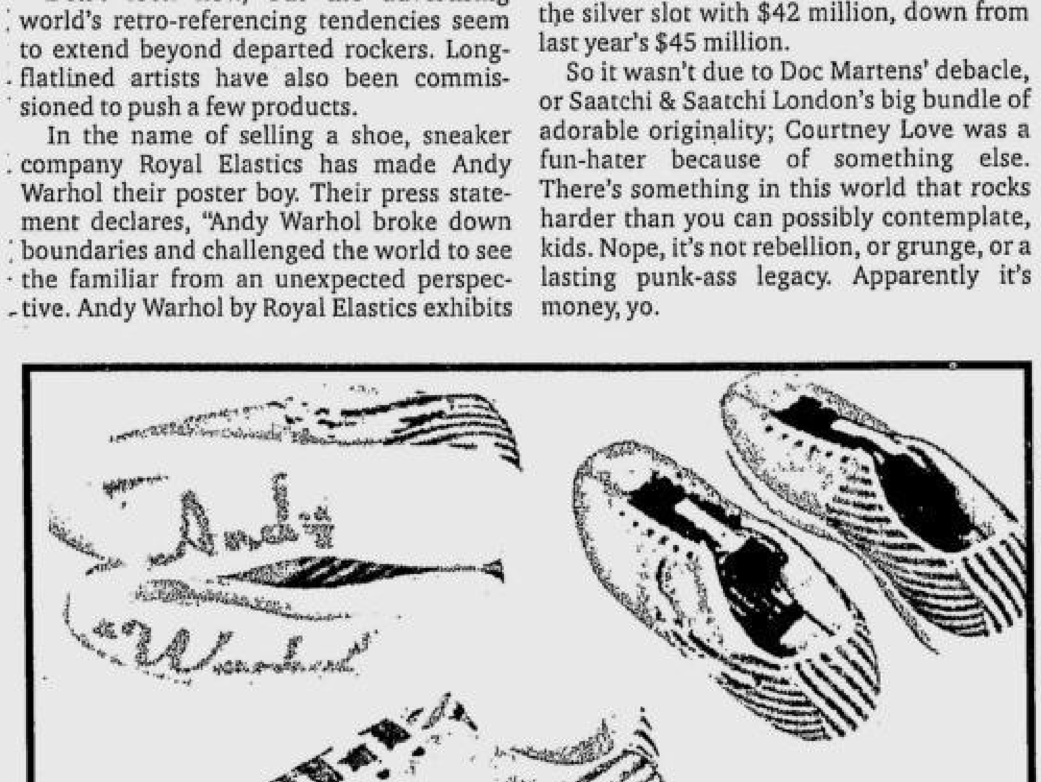
Pseudo-new parallel development

The proposed bill walks the line between cashing in on Anna Nicole Smith and Co. and the free-speech protections of the First Amendment. For Assemblyman Richard Brodsky, a Westchester Democrat and lawyer, it's about stopping the bobble head dolls, not the plays.

Hmmm. This pseudo-new parallel development puts the whole Doc Martens thing in a pseudo-new context. Circling back to Courtney Love, there may be more to her outrage than a silly ad campaign would suggest.

After she sold a 25-percent stake in Nirvana's song catalog to New York music publishing company, Primewave, Kurt Cobain became Forbes.com's number one top-earning dead celeb. The list, published in October last year, said Cobain earned $50 million between October 2005 and October 2006. He edged out the previous six-feet-under king, Elvis Presley, who wound up in the silver slot with $42 million, down from last year's $45 million.

So it wasn't due to Doc Martens' debacle, or Saatchi & Saatchi London's big bundle of adorable originality; Courtney Love was a fun-hater because of something else. There's something in this world that rocks harder than you can possibly contemplate, kids. Nope, it's not rebellion, or grunge, or a lasting punk-ass legacy. Apparently it's money, yo.



CREATIVITY x $$$? In the future everyone will wear Royal Elastics Andy Warhol sneakers for at least 15 minutes.

Rocked and Rewired

24/7

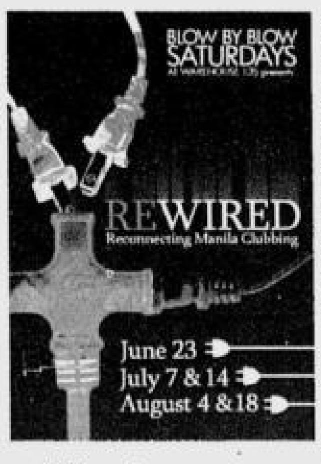
Paolo R. Reyes
Janine Cuenca-Dario

"THIS IS NO LONGER A ONE-night stand, we are officially not a 'fling,'" wrote Rock Ed Philippines founder Gang Badoy on the upcoming anniversary of her forward-thinking and volunteer-driven organization.

Since 2005, Rock Ed has been rocking society by providing venues for alternative education on socio-political issues, be it through music, film, art, fashion, theater, literature, dance, and other forms of social artistry. In the past, the group has taken this "classroom" to all sorts of atypical settings—from concert events and relief operations, to jails and clean-up projects.

On June 28 and 30, they will stage a massive, two-day anniversary concert, "One Rock Ed Nation," at Saguijo and Eastwood City Central Plaza, respectively. Among those scheduled to perform on both nights are Sound, Chillitees, Radioactive Sago Project, Mozzie, Swissy, Peryodiko, Pumping Pluto, Musical O, Kjwan, Up Dharma Down, Paramita, Giniling Festival, Johnny Alegre Affinity, and Chicosci.

"These two concerts are our rallies for good governance," says Badoy. "It is our way of collecting our voices together to say to the newly elected officials to 'Keep your Promises.' And in turn, we will keep ours." Visit www.rockedphilippines.org.



More Super! 24/7 events:

June 23, Saturday

Fête de la Musique 2007 at Malate; Rewired: Reconnecting Manila Clubbing feat. DJs Adrian Cuenca, Funk Avy, Houseboy, Lady Trinity, James Bald 008, Mulan, & Travis Monsod at Warehouse 135; All Tomorrow's Parties feat. The Late Isabel, The Automatics & The Dorques at Mag:net Café Katipunan; Up Dharma Down at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); High School Musical at Meralco Theater; Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; DJs Jon Herrera & Tolo Bote at Temple

June 24, Sunday

Objectif Paris: The Photographs of Henri Cartier Bresson, Jean Auvigne, and Marc Riboud at Ayala Museum; MAFBEX 2007 at World Trade Center; 3rd Virgin Labfest at CCP; Nuevo Ritmo at Café Havana Greenbelt

June 25, Monday

Musical Fascist Night: Diego Mapa at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); Radioactive Sago Project & Wajihuara at Mag:net Katipunan; Julianne at Conspiracy; 3rd Virgin Labfest at CCP; Happy Mondays w/ Borgy Manotoc at Embassy Cuisine; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt; I Don't Like Mondays! w/ DJ RO at Gweilos Makati

June 26, Tuesday

Kate Torralba, Drip, Makopa, Triggerbliss, Taken By Cars, Cambio, and Duster at Saguijo; Cuisine Royale w/ DJ Manolet Dario at Embassy Cuisine; SPIT at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); Electronica Night at Fiamma; Sparkle w/ DJ Patch at Absinth; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; Aretha & Souled Out at Merk's

June 27, Wednesday

Acoustic Jive at Segafredo Greenbelt 2; Terno Inferno! feat. Up Dharma Down, Swissy, Outerhope, Bandang Shirley, Daydream Cycle, and Radioactive Sago Project at Saguijo; Rock Series 3 w/ Orange & Lemons at Metro Bar; Out of Body Experience, Day One Movement, & Boy Elroy at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Lush: Smooth Rn'B at Fiamma; DJs Mars Miranda & Johnyverse at Embassy Club

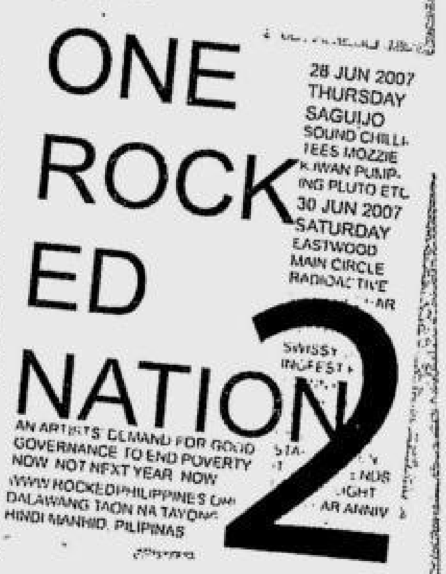
June 28, Thursday

Rock Ed Anniversary feat. Kjwan, Sound, Chillitees, Radioactive Sago Project, Mozzie, Swissy, Peryodiko, and Musical O at Saguijo; Paolo Santos at Conspiracy; G4M Freedom Party at Bed; Fabric w/ Jermaine Brown at Piedra; Cynthia Alexander at Tiendesitas; Latin Night w/ Tribo Manila at Mezze; Fluxxe Thursdays at Absinth; Soundsgood DJs at Nuvo; Jazz Night w/ Helen & Makopa at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); Reggae Mistress at Café Havana Greenbelt; Backtrack Thursdays at Club O; Radio Coquina at Coquina; Open Mic Night at Azzurro Linden Suites; The Groove at Merk's; Myxtreme at Tropezz

June 29, Friday

House of Soul feat. DJ Jason Soong at Alchemy; Reggae Night: Milagros Dancehall Collective at Mag:net Café (Bonifacio High Street); Bamboo: Live! at Metro Bar; Elektro Disko w/ DJ Adrian Cuenca & Ms. Badkiss at M Café; Kjwan, Greyhoundz, Subscapular, Queso, Neruda, & Angulo at Saguijo; FunkyFry at Mezze; Out 'n Proud: DIVA Friday at Bed; Soul Shine w/ DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Jive Fridays at Temple; Arriba at Café Havana Greenbelt; DJ Scratchmark at Prince of Jaipur; Cynthia Alexander at Mag:net Katipunan; Joey Ayala at Conspiracy; Artist Talk: Aerial Photography w/ German aerial photographer Jörg Bodenbender at Silverlens Gallery

Schedules may change without prior notice. For a complete listing of events, text 24/7 GIGS to 2851 (Globe) and 2951 (Smart). Submit your schedules before Tuesday to events@mag24-7.com & mag24_7@yahoo.com.


ONE
ROCK
ED
NATION
2
28 JUN 2007
THURSDAY
SAGUIJO
SOUND CHILLITEES MOZZIE KJWAN PUMPING PLUTO ETC
30 JUN 2007
SATURDAY
EASTWOOD
MAIN CIRCLE
RADIOACTIVE
SWISSY
AN ARTISTS' DEMAND FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE TO END POVERTY
NOW NOT NEXT YEAR NOW
WWW.ROCKEDPHILIPPINES.ORG
DALAWANG TAON NA TAYONG
HINDI MANHID. PILIPINAS

I'm glad I've MET.

"Incomparable! Makes me healthy inside, fair and beautiful outside!"
— CORY QUIRINO, TV Personality & Wellness Icon

We cannot choose the kind of skin tone we want at birth.

But fortunately for those who have been born with dark complexion, they can now enjoy the fairer skin they have always dreamed of by using MET TATHIONE.

MET TATHIONE is a dietary supplement imported from Japan that contains Alpha Lipoic Acid (a natural moisturizer), Sodium Ascorbate (natural vitamin C), and *Reduced Glutathione*, regarded by dermatologists and medical practitioners as the highest grade and safest form of Glutathione available in the market today. This 'Master Antioxidant' strengthens the immune system; delays ageing; boosts sexual potency; prevents skin allergies and stress-related diseases; and decreases the production of melanin, the pigment that gives skin its dark color.

Take two capsules of MET TATHIONE twice a day after meals and you will notice your skin becoming fairer, your underarms and bikini line lightening, and your lips turning pinkish in color – in as little as two weeks!

And because MET TATHIONE is taken orally, you avoid the inconvenience of cream applications that can stain your clothes and leave you with a messy, sticky feeling.

When life has blessed you with less than the skin tone that you desire, take charge with MET TATHIONE. It's good for your health, and most especially your self-esteem.

Now, that's beauty inside out!

MET TATHIONE

Available at mercury drug and other leading drug stores nationwide.

For inquiries, text REG (space) NAME (space) ADDRESS (space) AGE and send to 09175500MET Hotline: 0917500IMET Website: www.whitebeautyphils.com

The slow movement

OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

UNWIND, UNWIRE.

This has always been my personal commandment of leisure. Forget the dictates of the speedaholic, Always On world; when I get away from the comfort zone, the pleasure of disconnection is the greatest indulgence.

Yet I had soon found out on a recent junket to Thailand, that personal deceleration, like vinyl records and typewriters, is on the verge of extinction. I had heeded my self-imposed tradition by and leaving my laptop nicely clammed up at home and shutting off my cell phone. (I had never gotten around to activating global roaming anyway!) Unplugging from the global network made perfect sense if one wanted to take in the whole organic experience.

Besides, no electronic gadget was present in the art directed postcard in my head. Where would a cell phone fit in while navigating a busy open-air market? Or while sipping coffee languidly in a café by a river with an unpronounceable name? Or while walking solemnly through a Buddhist temple? Nowhere indeed.

So in comparison to my colleagues who had their thumbs resting permanently on key pads of cell phones, Blackberrys or laptops, I was the equivalent of a happy slug on Rivotril. It was freedom.

Is slowing down a dying art? A global movement in key cities around the world believes so, encouraging a cultural shift by putting the brakes on our personal speedometers in this hyperfast age.

Modern hedonism

Called The Slow Movement, it proposes slowing down life's pace taking control of time instead of being a slave to it. It's a call to stop and smell the proverbial roses, which has become a rare thing in a world that generally believes that faster is better—whether it's communication, food, travel, lifestyle, and yes, even sex.

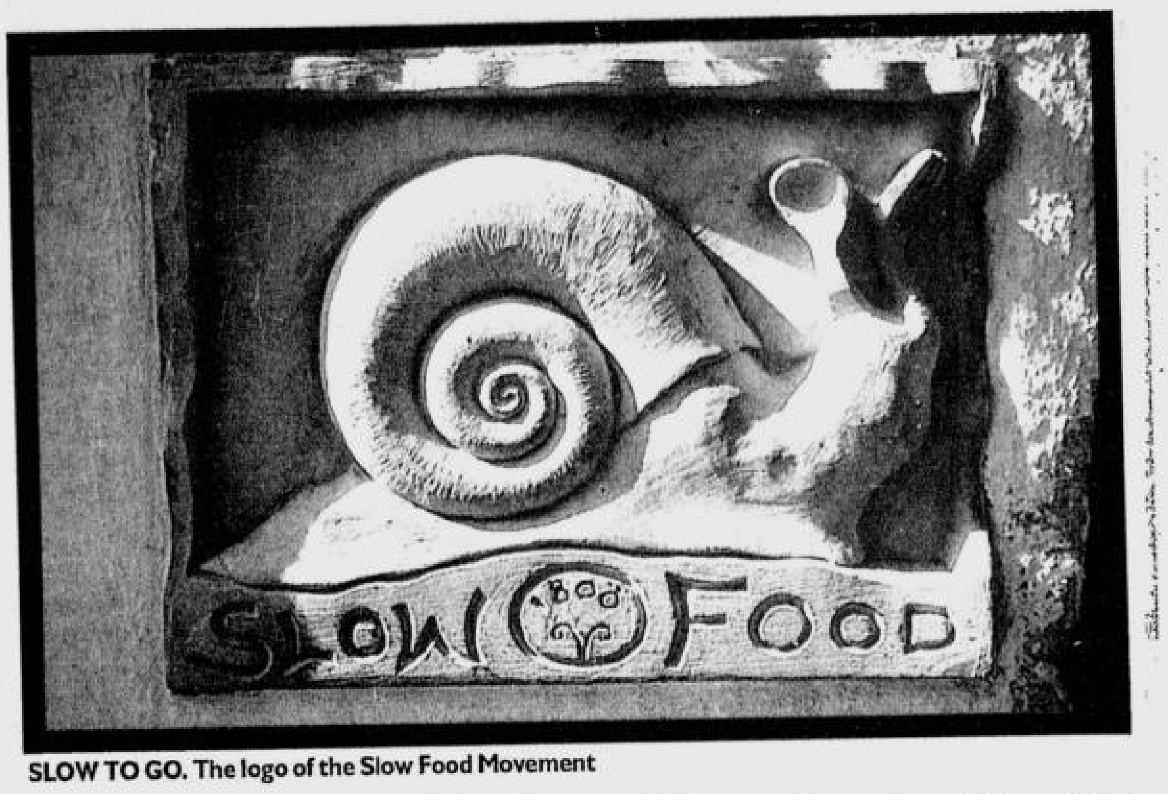
The philosophy of Slow extols the virtues of savoring life, living well, and indulging the senses—a modern version of hedonism! But lest we believe that the movement espouses laziness and unproductivity, "slow" in this sense emphasizes activity. It's about making full use of our time in selected endeavors.

The Zen like directive of all this: find balance amidst the frenetic world. That means being able to "shut down" every once in a while, and not freak out if you haven't checked your e-mails in two days, or your cell phone in two hours. Technophiles are being persuaded to practice Slow E-mail, which is akin to putting speed bumps on the information superhighway.

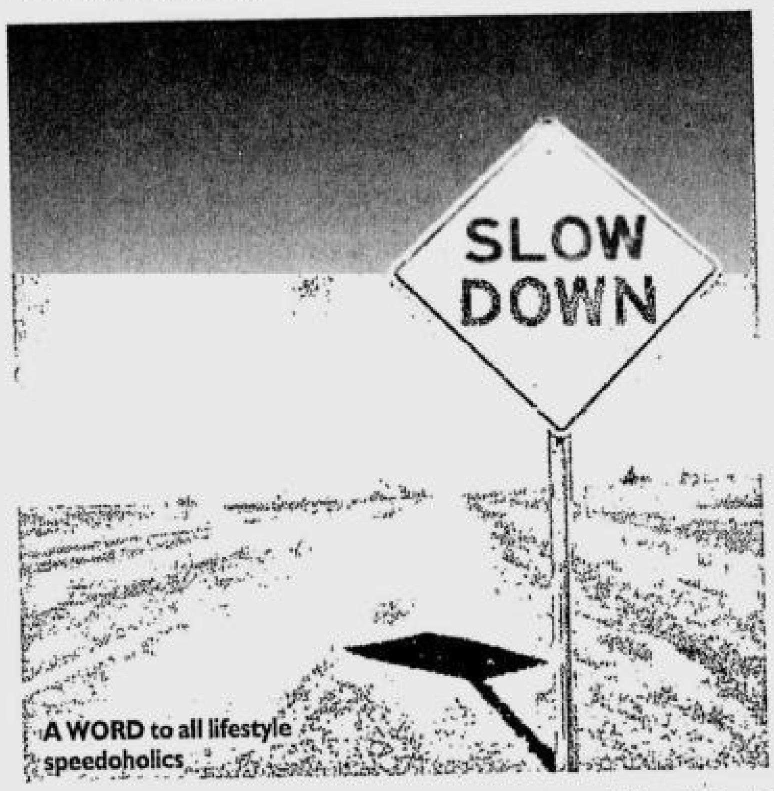
The worldwide movement to slow down and stop and smell the proverbial roses

A senior manager at IBM reportedly adds his own pro-slow battlecry to every e-mail he sends: "Read your mail just twice each day. Recapture your life's time and relearn to dream. Join the slow e-mail movement!"

Proponents of the slow are also encouraging people to having more leisurely lunches instead of wharfing down cheeseburgers on your way to another meeting. Now there's food for thought! In fact, the Slow movement began when the opening of a McDonald's restaurant in Piazza di Spagna in Rome sparked public protests and eventually led to the creation of the Slow Food organization, which resists fast food establishments and the Big Mac mentality in order to preserve the cultural sanctity of certain places. It was started in Italy and has now expanded to 100 countries.



SLOW TO GO. The logo of the Slow Food Movement



A WORD to all lifestyle speedoholics

Slow in the City

The Slow Food movement soon inspired the Slow City movement, which aims to reinvent urban living by putting back pleasure over profit. A Slow City is a sanctuary from the high-speed frenzy of the global economy. An example of this is the Mediterranean town of Bra, where "laid-back is officially the law of the land."

Thus, locals linger over their coffee outdoors, men sit on stone benches, and everyone has time to greet each other "Buon giorno." There are no big brand retail shops and restaurants, instead, there are handicraft stores, shops selling organic sausages and handmade chocolates and speciality cheese-makers. Instead of chugging down Cokes in bars and nightclubs, the young people are sipping wine.

Snail's praise

There is a certain ambassador of slowness who is gaining momentum (ironically enough) around the world with his doctrine of leisure. He is Carl Honoré, a Canadian journalist who is to the Cult of Slowness as Al Gore is to Global Warming. He is the author of the best-seller "In Praise of Slowness: How a Worldwide Movement is Challenging the Cult of Speed."

He asks a few teaser questions in examination of our lifestyles—are you always in a hurry? Does life feel like a never-ending race against the clock?

Honoré claims that we pay a heavy price for an unchecked, over-stimulated lifestyle. "The Slow Movement offers a lifeline." he writes, "It is not a Luddite plot to abolish all things modern. You don't have to shun technology, live in the wilderness or do everything at a snail's pace. Being 'Slow' means living better in the hectic modern world by striking a balance between fast and slow."

Ditch the postcards

From slow food, slow cities and slow e-mail, people these days are even encouraged to hit the brakes while travelling. Newsweek recently did a cover story on "Slow Travel," which highlighted the benefits of spending more time in fewer places, rather than packing a dozen cities on a whirlwind tour. By staying longer in one place, travelers get to know the locals, savour the cuisine and may even familiarize themselves with a new language—hallmarks of global citizenship. Instead of a thick wad of postcards and photos to show as proof of being there and doing that, what the traveler gains is a deeper, richer experience, and ultimately, a better perspective and worldview.

So is slower better?

This global renaissance is simply a new examination of the wise old adage that haste makes waste. It has just become too easy to forget to indulge in age-old pleasures with the world on overdrive today. So I say go slow. For truly, the best things in life should not be rushed. And that includes a cup of coffee, a good book, great conversation and a glass of fine wine. Mmm, life is good!

Back to basics

TWENTY-SIX-YEAR-OLD CHRISTINA Aguilera has star power and sultry sex appeal to burn with the worldwide success of her double-disc CD, Back to Basics, where she pays tribute to the music that has solely inspired her, including elements of soul, jazz and blues music adding a modern twist to them with her vocal acrobatics, fast stomping choruses and incomparable showmanship.

She displays rocket-like velocity, her hapless competitors will not stand a chance.

Recently winning the 2007 Grammy for "Best Female Pop Vocal Performance" for her single, "Ain't No Other Man," the new album features the best of Christina's talents. Now the "Dirrty Girl's" new track, "Candyman," is hitting the airwaves and topping music charts and countdowns all around the globe.

Witness as this petite powerhouse takes center stage on July 6 at the Fort Bonifacio Open Field for the highly-awaited concert this year—Christina Aguilera - Back to Basics Live in Manila.

Presented by Globe, Christina will be performing hits from her latest album like the Grammy-winning "Ain't No Other Man," "Hurt" and "Candyman," as well as ultra-hot arrangements of her well-loved hits such as "Genie in A Bottle," "What A Girl Wants," "Beautiful" and "Dirrty." This is one show that would definitely provide plenty of big vocal runs and hard-hit high notes, Aguilera's specialty.

Tickets are at P7,350 for VIP seats, P3,675 for Patron and P1,050 for General Admission. Call Ticketworld at 891-9999 for reservation and inquiries, or visit their website at www.ticketworld.com.ph. Special discounts await Globe subscribers!

Text AGUILERA to 2222 for free information on Globe's Christina Aguilera promos.

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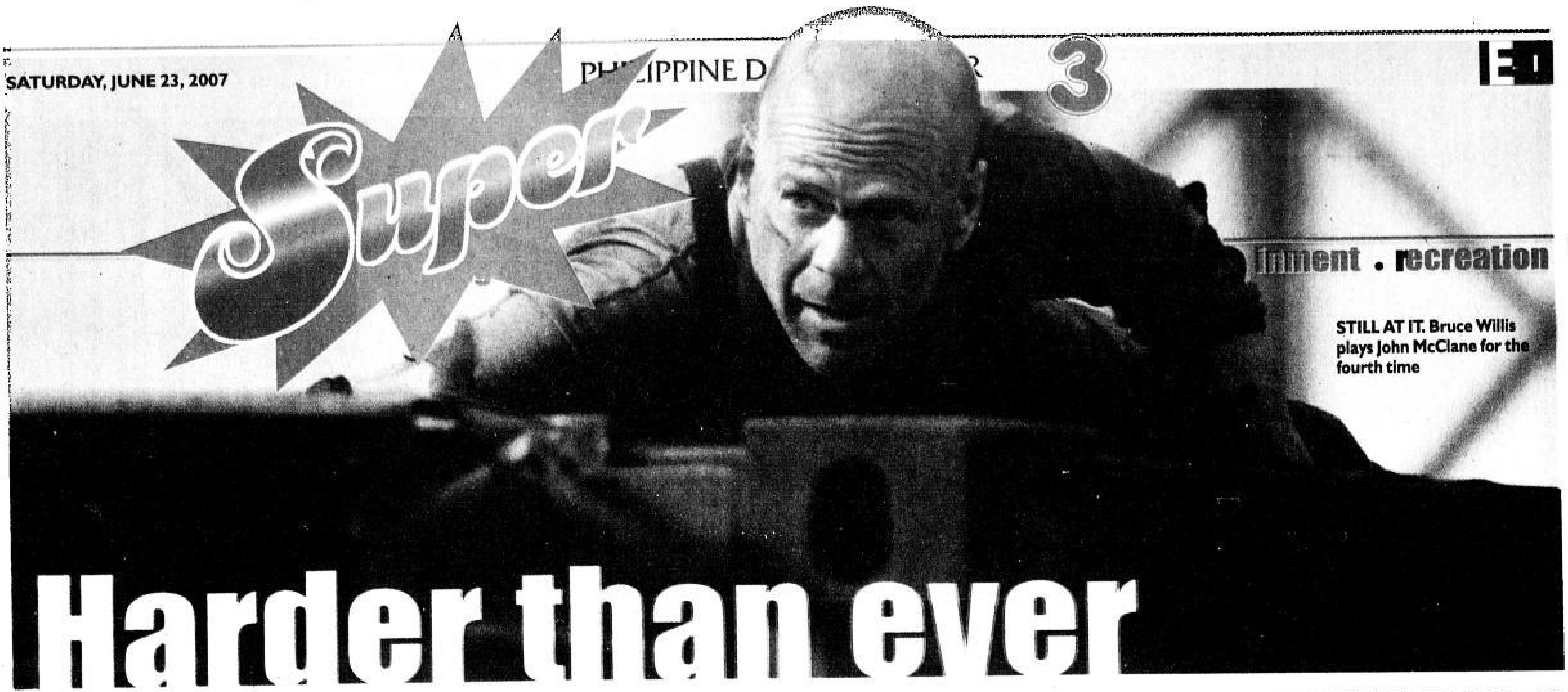


STILL AT IT. Bruce Willis plays John McClane for the fourth time

Harder than ever

Here comes Die Hard 4.0, twelve years since the last Die Hard movie was released. And Bruce Willis is crazy proud of it

By Pam Pastor

TOKYO, JAPAN—THE PARK Tower Hall was packed with journalists all eagerly waiting for the arrival of Bruce Willis, Maggie Q and Justin Long.

The three are the stars of Die Hard 4.0, a movie that has created a buzz not just for star power and the promise of excitement but because it's taken its sweet time in getting itself ready to be enjoyed by audiences.

And when we say sweet time, we mean twelve years.

Die Hard: With a Vengeance, the last in what everyone thought was just going to be the trilogy of beloved character John McClane's celluloid adventures, was released in 1995.

Next installment

This year, fans are getting ready to watch the next installment of the Die Hard franchise (which Twentieth Century Fox will release in theaters all over the world on July 4)— and one of the people to thank is director Len Wiseman. Bruce said, "I said at that time that I was gonna take a break from action movies and wait for the genre to reinvent itself. It seemed like a really a smart thing to say. I had no idea what it meant at that time until I met Len Wiseman and he sat down with us and explained his vision of this film. A lot of this film visually is Len Wiseman's concept of what Die Hard in 2007 should be."

Even Bruce seems to find the big gap between the release of the third and fourth movies fascinating. He said, "Len Wiseman was 16 years old when the first film came out. There's something really strange about that and something really great about that because a fan of the film was the one who directed this film. Fathers who were kids when they saw the first film can take their kids now to see this film."

Bruce Willis' John McClane has done some growing up too. In the new movie, he has a college-aged daughter Lucy. The action starts on a Fourth of July weekend, when an attack on a United States infrastructure starts to shut down the country. John McClane and hacker Matt Farrell (played by the hilarious Justin Long who audiences met in Herbie: Fully Loaded, That '70s Show and those Mac vs PC ads) find themselves in the middle of chaos—and battling against the scheme's mysterious mastermind.

Hard work

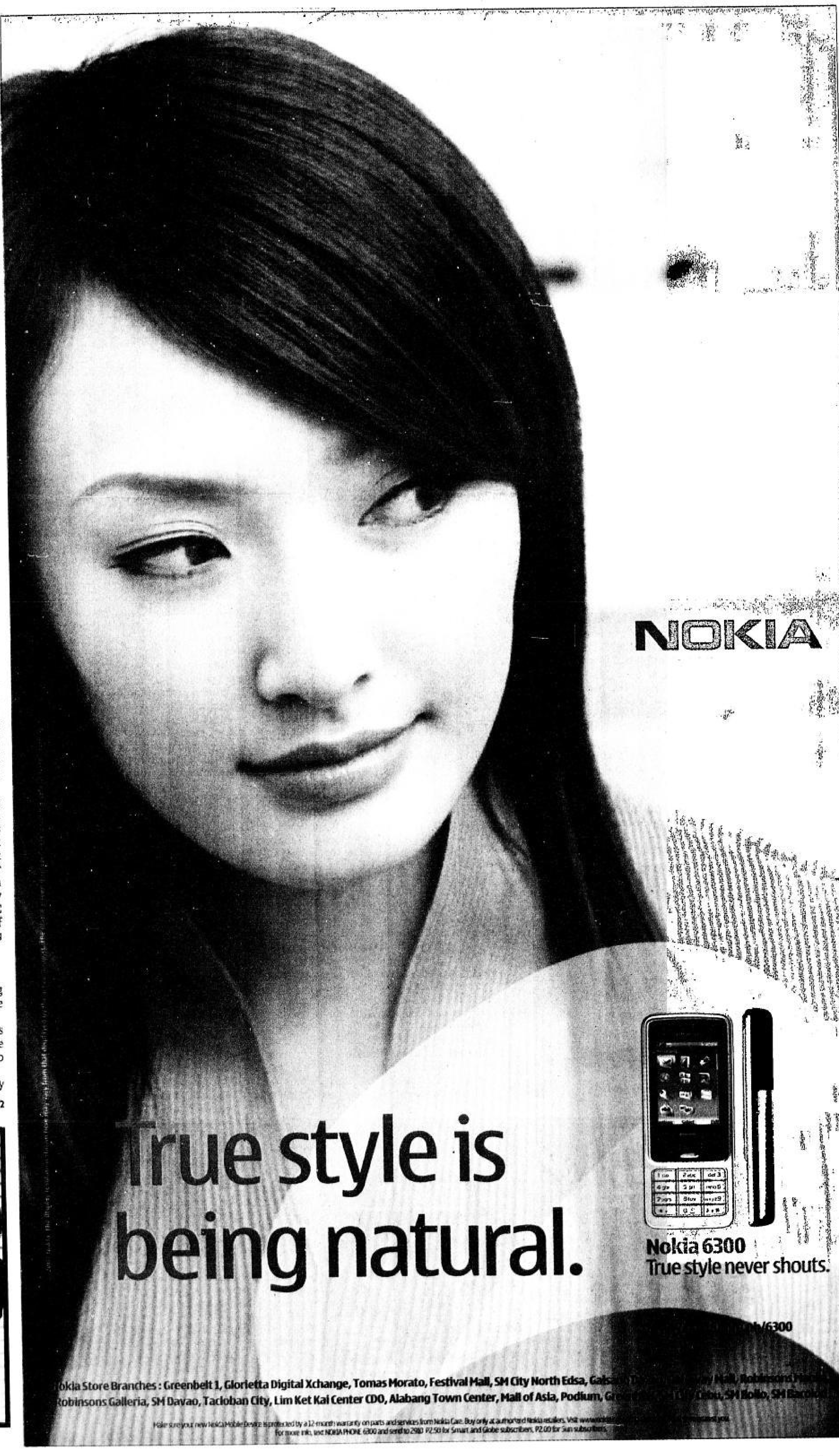
Considered by Bruce as the most draining of all four Die Hard movies, he believes the cast's hard work has paid off.

"A year ago when we started making this film, the potential to fail was very high. There was a huge risk factor. But it really lived up to all our expectations."

He attributes their success in filming partly

HARDER/ E2

SIDEKICK. Bruce Willis and Justin Long



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DIE HARD 4.0 promises a lot of action

Harder than ever

It took 12 action-packed years—but Die Hard 4.0 is worth the wait

From page E1

to how well the actors got along. "We have a really great cast and that always makes it fun and enjoyable. You can complain to each other because actors know what each other go through in trying to create a character and trying to make an interesting film. The fact that it's so easy to talk about Die Hard 4.0 is because it turned out so well. If it didn't turn out well, we'd be having a different conversation and it probably would be taking place in Los Angeles."

Maggie Q (Mission Impossible III), who plays Mai, one of the villains, agrees. "It's about who you work with. When they're wonderful, the whole experience just becomes this really great, wonderful thing."

Genuine affection

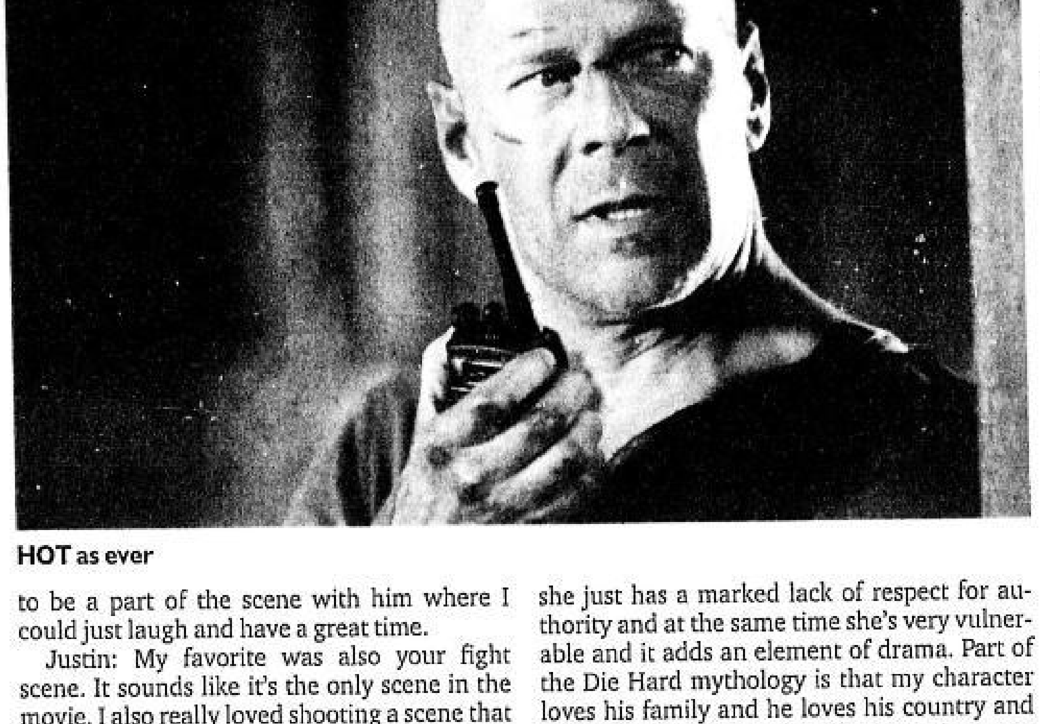
The genuine affection the members of the cast have for one another is evident at the way they lavish each other with sincere praise and even how they laugh at each other's jokes.

Bruce, Justin and Maggie sat down with press people from all over Asia, discussed their film, cracked jokes and had a blast with their hardworking translators.

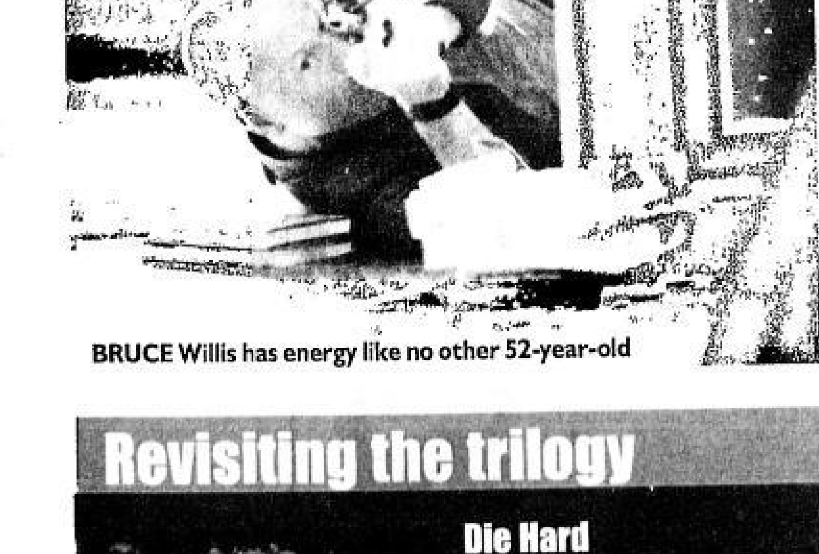
Which was your favorite scene from the movie?

Bruce: The one that comes to mind first is the one Maggie and I physically worked on the most—the scene in the elevator. The scene was a creation of Len Wiseman, it was an idea that he had. Fox ended up spending about a million and a half dollars on this huge elevator set that we drove a car into. This is the biggest fight in the film. This is the first time ever—both in my life and in films—that I fought with a woman and didn't win (laughter). No, I don't fight with women at all. Maggie kicks the sh*t out of me. She whoops my ass. It's just amazing that they built this thing—a five story elevator shaft. I can't believe I took that beating and still lived to talk about it. I also got to hang out with my good friend Justin Long, my man right here. We were in the trenches for many many days, things blowing up, unpleasant conditions you know, when they don't bring the coffee on time … (laughter)

Maggie: My favorite is the elevator scene. The physical challenge of the film was incredible for me. He's kind of a big guy and he's been doing this for so long and he's so good at what he does and there's a lot to learn. It's wonderful having somebody who has their own style and their own take on it. That was great. And Justin and I had a scene together that's really short. Justin has this wonderful gift of humor that he displays so well in the film. I am lucky to be a part of the scene with him where I could just laugh and have a great time.



HOT as ever



BRUCE Willis has energy like no other 52-year-old

Justin: My favorite was also your fight scene. It sounds like it's the only scene in the movie. I also really loved shooting a scene that got cut—it was a very erotic love scene between Maggie Q and myself. (laughter)

Maggie: It will be on the DVD.

Justin: It was very racy. I just loved watching all the action.

Maggie: You have to say you were kidding.

Justin: I'm just kidding, unfortunately. It was a joke. Not a very funny one, but a joke. (laughter) I've never done a movie like this, never done a big action movie. I've always been a fan of Bruce's work so just getting to do scenes with him was very surreal. It was an experience, it was an amazing experience. I just loved watching them. They're so talented when it comes to (action) … I'm not at all active myself, so I'm impressed by people who just move fast. Okay now here's the twenty minute Japanese version.

What was filming the movie like for you?

Bruce: The blood has dried on the floor and the aches and pains, in my case, are starting to fade in my memory. But it was a really difficult film to make. Acting is not a hard job like digging big holes in the ground and putting a pipe in there but this was a really difficult shoot, difficult things to do on a tight schedule in order to get it out on time. So now we're here laughing and joking, giggling, but let me tell you, when we were making this film, it was difficult and these two kids were really pros and they really hung in there. A lot of times when you could have said, you know, I just wanna go home, I don't want to do it anymore, but everyone really hung in there and really worked hard on this.

Tell us more about Die Hard 4.0.

Bruce: I'm really glad that this film is not just a big crazy action film. There is a story here, there is human drama here. The character of Lucy McClane is the only other character than myself that made it out of the first film—she was the little 5-year-old girl who said, Daddy come home and Mary Elizabeth Winstead did a really terrific job on this film. She brought her own sense of the McClaneism, of the John McClane humor, the John McClane kind of in-your-face (attitude), she just has a marked lack of respect for authority and at the same time she's very vulnerable and it adds an element of drama. Part of the Die Hard mythology is that my character loves his family and he loves his country and he's not gonna let anybody harm innocent people. He has a very strong disrespect for authority. He has a very difficult time speaking without cussing, without swearing. And there is an interesting story to watch and there are surprises in it. Part of the interesting thing is that now there are four of these films—you can look at me when I'm 32 years old and you can look at me when I'm 52. The first one was great, the second one and the third had some great moments, and this last one, the fourth one really kind of bookends the quartet of these films now. It really went back to an old school version of action movies and yet Len Wiseman had the ability to bring the film into the 21st century.

What message would you like to bring to your audience?

Bruce: That this is just a film. This is just a piece of entertainment that for 90 minutes you get to go in a theater and go on this crazy wild ride with us but when you walk out you know it was just a film, not real life, not real bullets, not real guns, no one really got hurt that bad. It's just entertainment, we're just trying to entertain you. I think everybody in the audience is smart enough to understand that.

How did you prepare for the movie?

Maggie: Normally, what's wonderful about Hollywood is they give you a lot of time for preparation. And living and working in Asia for ten years, we just don't have the many resources so it's a little more difficult to give up that time to prepare for a film. Normally what would happen is you would train a couple of months. But I was working on another film before Die Hard started filming and I finished that film about a week before I started Die Hard. I had a week to learn a lot of the fight and to kind of get back into shape so it was tough. Time is an issue always in this business, time is money so I had to train a lot during the filming. It's kind of great because it keeps everything fresh.

Justin: It also helps that Maggie is genetically perfect. (Maggie laughs)

What was it like to work on Die Hard 4.0, knowing the success of the first three films?

Justin: First of all let me just say thank you for asking me a question. And now I forgot the question. (laughter)

Bruce: Let me take it from here. I got it. (laughter) It's a very daunting, challenging film to walk into especially because my character has his own sense of humor that has been in the films for 22 years now. Justin Long comes in and brought his own completely different, completely funny, weird, who-knows-where-it-comes-from-but-extremely-funny sense of humor in this film and adds so much to it in a very different way. It's like walking into another comic's show and being dared to be funny but he really did, he brought such a different spin, such a weird sarcasm, a different sense of humor that cracks me up and now I don't think anything's funny anymore. I've lost the will to laugh.

What was it like to work with Bruce Willis?

Justin: People always ask me about what I think of Bruce and what surprised me the most about Bruce was how funny he was and what a good sense of humor he has. He always plays cool, heroic tough guys and you don't usually see him as a genuinely funny guy. Bruce was genuinely such a giving, down to earth nice guy. He made things easier for us because he popped our Die Hard cherries …

Maggie: Oh my god.

Justin: Thank God you don't speak English, most of you. (laughter) But yeah, we were Die Hard virgins.

You play a hacker in the movie—what was that like?

Justin: I don't know a lot about computers. I can barely turn one on. I know where the CDs go. (laughter) It was scary having to deliver a lot of technical jargon. Like, mutating encyrption algorithm. Do you know what it is? I don't. I had to say it though about fifteen times for the movie. I still don't know what it means. That was very daunting, walking into an iconic franchise and just hoping I don't ruin it.

Where do you get all that energy?

Bruce: Thank you. I think the thing that's most surprising to me is that I'm still here, that I get to be here. Just by the sheer fact of sticking around for 22 years and some actors don't get to stick around that long. I'm thrilled to still be here, thrilled that I get to act in big movies like Die Hard 4.0 and do supporting roles in other people's films. I still love acting, I really do and I still love the process.

What is a hero to you?

Justin: Hero. The opposite of me. (laughter)

Bruce: I don't see myself as a hero, I especially don't see John McClane as a hero. You have to remember, I was 32 years old when I made that film, I had only started acting and so much about me as a kid coming out of New Jersey was what formed John McClane's character. Disrespect for authority, a really jacked up sense of humor. I always have a sense of right and wrong, of justice. You will not allow anybody, a bad guy, a bad country, a bad monster from outer space, whatever it is, you're not gonna let somebody hurt someone that you love. I can't think of an answer beyond that. If you got any strength left at all, you're gonna put yourself between yourself and the people that can't look after themselves.

Maggie: For that answer, Bruce is my hero.

Revisiting the trilogy

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BRUCE WILLIS
DIE HARD
DIGITALLY THX MASTERED

Die Hard

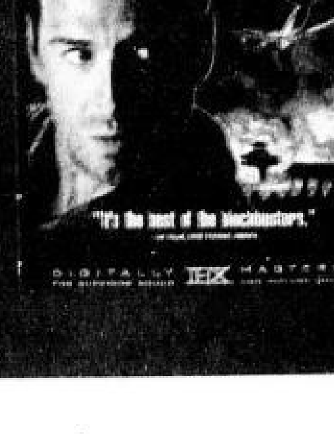
Year released: 1988

Director: John McTiernan

Cast: Bruce Willis as John McClane, Bonnie Dedelia as Holly McClane, Alan Rickman as Hans Gruber

Plot: German terrorists take the people inside the Nakatomi Plaza Hotel hostage. New York cop John McClane tries to save all hostages—including his own wife Holly.

Trivia: The German the terrorists speak is sometimes grammatically incorrect and meaningless. The line "Yippee-ki-yay, motherf-er! is used in all three Die Hard movies. Richard Gere was considered for the role of John McClane.



Die Hard 2

Year released: 1990

Director: Renny Harlin

Cast: Bruce Willis as John McClane, Bonnie Bedelia as Holly McClane, William Sadler as Col. Stuart

Plot: John McClane faces villains who sieze control of airport communications and who are threatening to cause plane crashes if their demands are not met.

Trivia: The confrontation between Bruce Willis and William Sadler on the plane wing took several nights to shoot. Huge fans were asked to blow fake snow in the background.

BRUCE WILLIS
DIE HARD
WITH A VENGEANCE
JEREMY IRONS
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
"FUN WITH A VENGEANCE!"
DIGITALLY THX MASTERED

Die Hard: With A Vengeance

Year released: 1995

Cast: John McTiernan, Bruce Willis as John McClane, Samuel L. Jackson as Zeus Carver, Jeremy Irons as Simon Gruber

The plot: This time, John McClane faces a deadly bomber and is forced to play his game as they race around New York.

Trivia: Sean Connery was the first choice for the role of Simon Gruber but Sean refused because he didn't want to play "such a diabolical villain."

SOURCE: IMDB.COM, ROTTENTOMATOES.COM

Philip Morris King Size

chill zone

A BLAST OF COOL WITH **PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE'S** CHILL ZONE

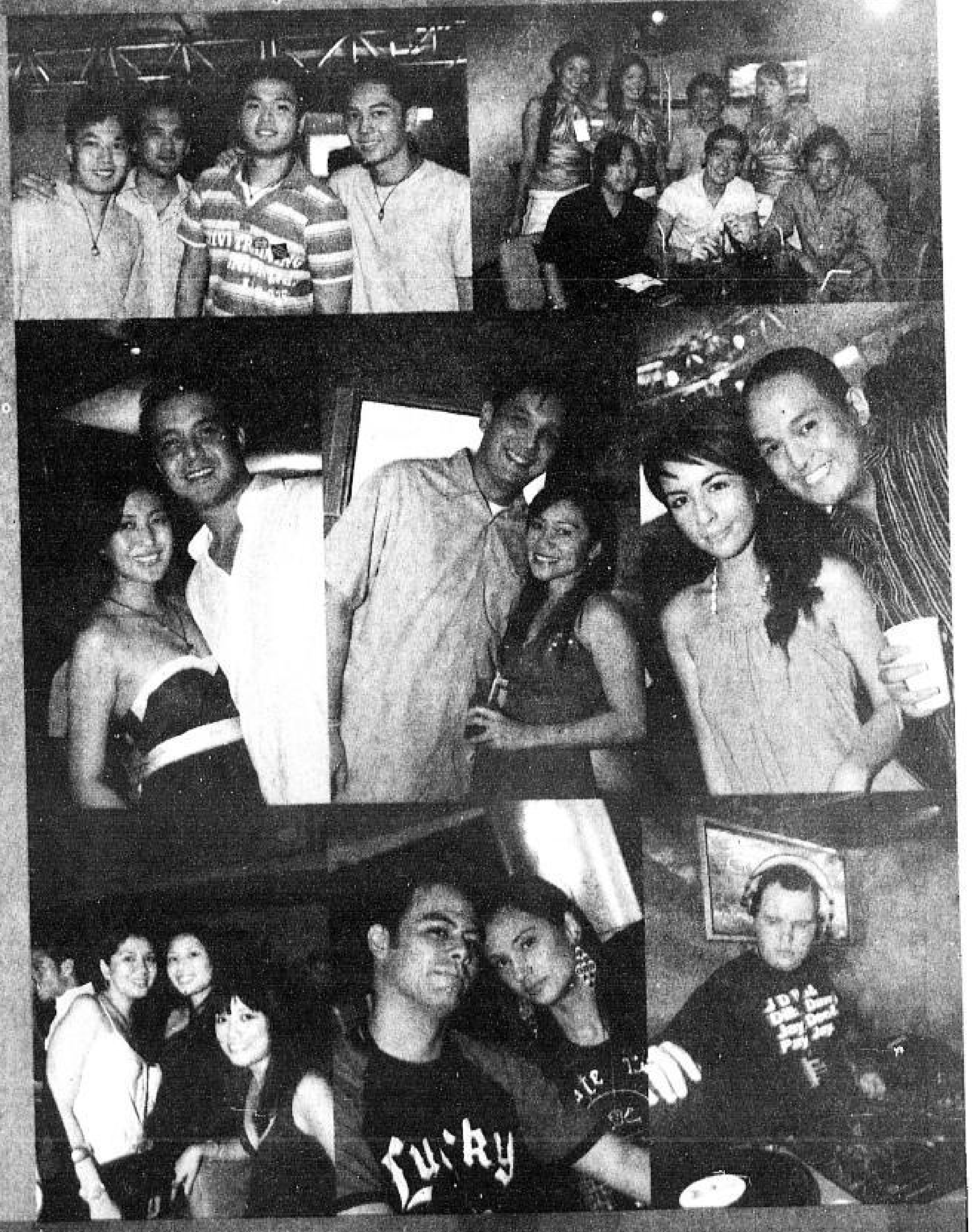
chill zone
Lucky

After a sensational party in Boracay last summer, PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE Chill Zone set off to the beautiful island of Cebu in all its party glory. For the first time in Cebu, PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE Chill Zone gave the south side's hip and happening crowd a fresh breeze of icy cool.

Cebu's Formo was the hottest address in town. PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE's Chill Zone's blazing blue lights and overflowing drinks kept guests chilled out through the night. The redesigned PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE boxes, now sporting a trendier and edgier minted look, prepared Cebu's partyphiles for a night of passionate and energetic dancing.

Sonic music warmed up the house and fueled the night's revelries. Wendell Garcia's tempo beats pushed the crowd into high gear while Elian Habayeb's smooth transitions with drum and bass beats added to the music masters' line-up. Maestro of deep disco house, DJ Ian Pooley, shared modern electronic music to an already pumped-up crowd. His blend of solid house music with various musical styles rocked Formo to the core.

The sounds of PHILIP MORRIS MENTHOL KING SIZE Chill Zone reverberated to the dance moves of lucky clubbers who were there to witness a fantastic clubbing experience.



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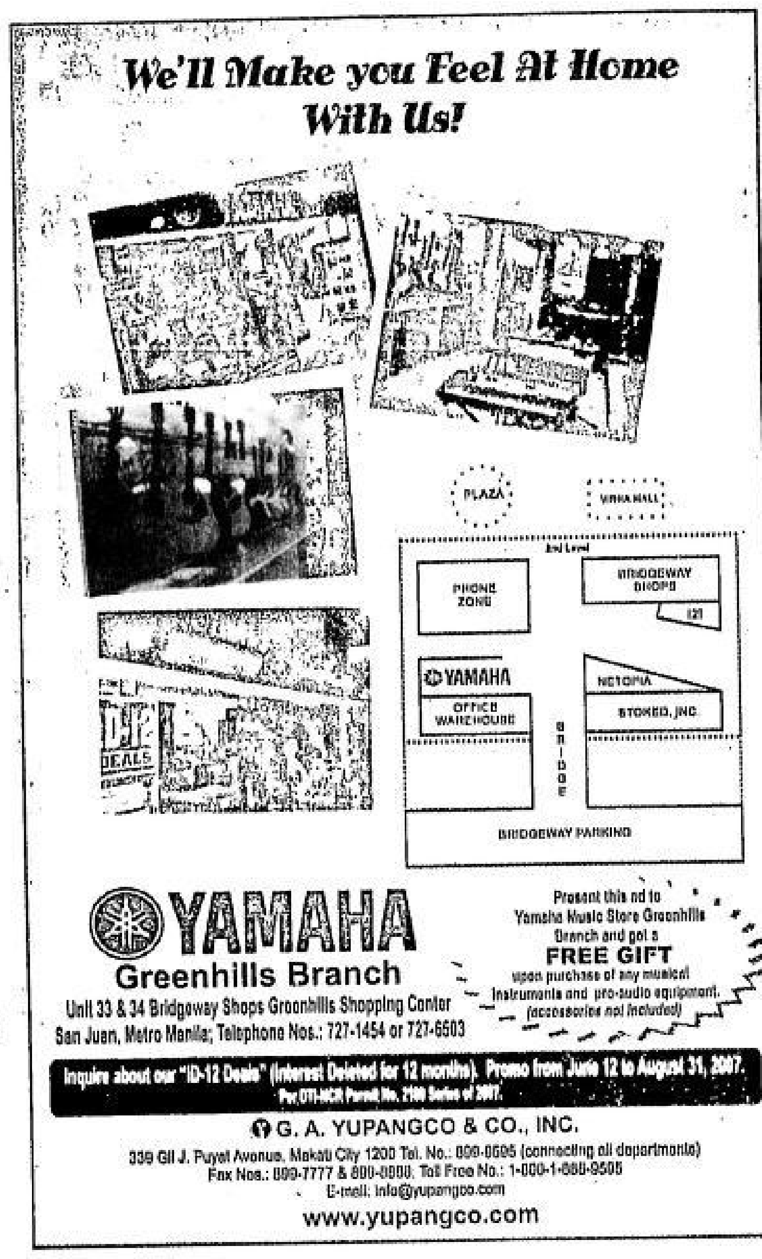
THE FANS and their blue shirts



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Red carpet action

THE RED carpet was quiet once again

Bruce Willis, Maggie Q and Justin Long hit the red carpet in Tokyo–and Super! was there

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

A CAR HAD FLIPPED OVER outside the Tokyo International Forum in Yuraku-cho. Its engine kept hissing, perhaps in protest of its odd, sad state, and clouds of smoke circled the air around it. But no one was alarmed.

Not the people wearing identical blue shirts. Not the many camera-armed men. Not the security personnel that lined the area.

There was no reason to be alarmed.

There had been no accident—the car was a prop used to help set the mood for the night's festivities, a celebration of Die Hard 4.0.

JUSTIN Long, Bruce Willis and Maggie Q

And everyone—from the blue shirt-wearing people who had the words Die Hard 4.0 emblazoned on their chests to the security men and the journalists—were all waiting for the red carpet arrival of Bruce Willis, Maggie Q and Justin Long. Super! was there, grabbing a spot in a sea of red carpet-invading camera-toting veterans to capture the excitement.

There were a number of false alarms—when instead of the three stars, Japanese personalities arrived. Some were greeted with cheers and screams, some with laughter, others with nonchalance.

A hyper guy suddenly came out, teaching the crowd to chant the names of Die Hard's stars. But his accent made the names sound different.

"Blu-see! Blu-see! Justeen! Justeen! Magi-yi! Magi-yi!"

The chanting hasn't stopped in our heads.

Soon, a SUV pulled up in front of the place. Bruce, Maggie and Justin stepped onto the red carpet and madness ensued.

The two-hour wait was instantly forgotten. There were loud screams and the cameras wouldn't stop flashing, each photographer eager to capture the actors' every step down the crimson lane.

Justin spent a long time talking to his Japanese fans, signing autographs, shaking hands, hugging them and even receiving a strange-looking banana stuffed toy.

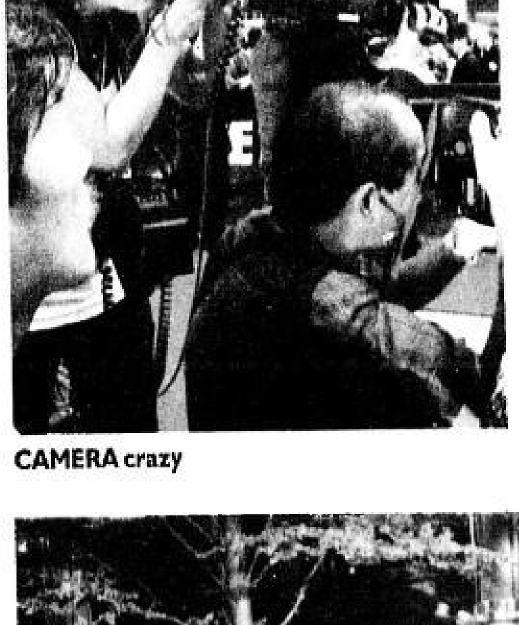
"What's that?" a photographer asked him.

"Uhh ... a banana, I think," he said, looking at the toy he had in his hand, as the people around him laughed.

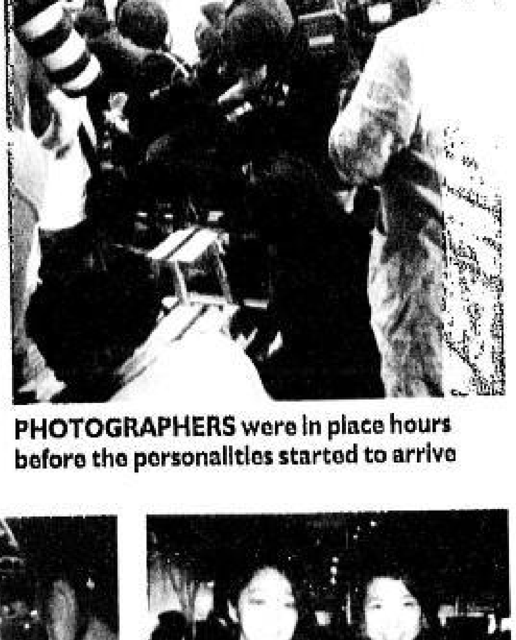
The stars kept walking, headed to the party inside. Soon, the lights stopped flashing and the screams faded into the distance. The blue shirt people were gone, as were the journalists, and the red carpet was silent once again.

THE SECURITY [illegible] hours before the arrival of the stars

ONE of the countless journalists ready to capture the moment

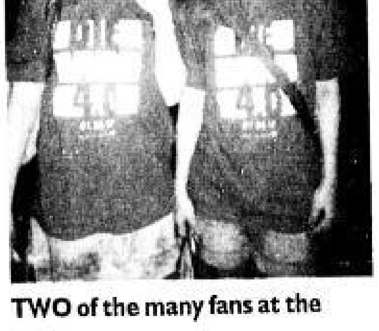


CAMERA crazy

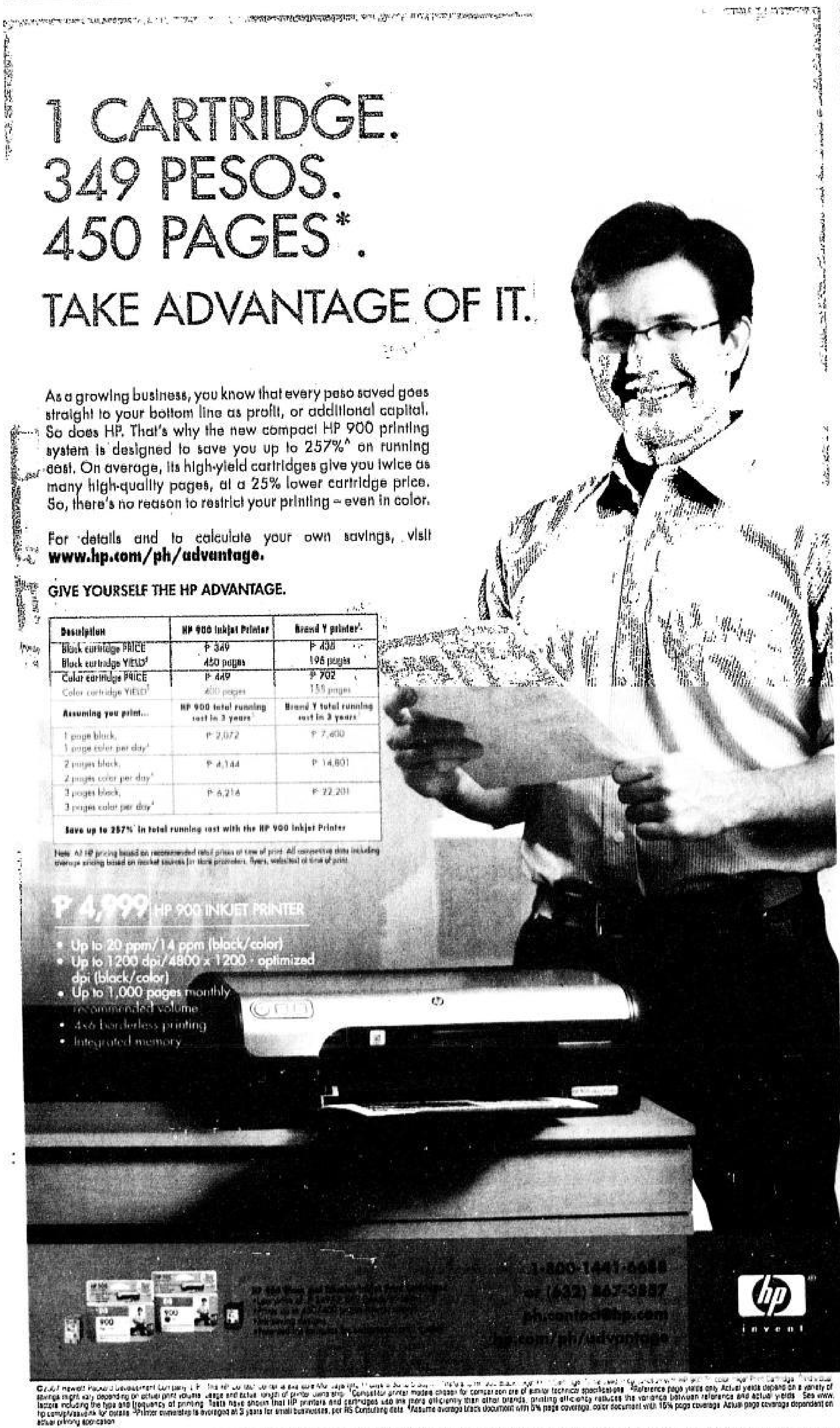


PHOTOGRAPHERS were in place hours before the personalities started to arrive

MADNESS ensued when Bruce Willis, Justin Long and Maggie Q arrived



TWO of the many fans at the venue



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IN THIS ISSUE
Carrey plays jailed homosexual in latest comedy /F4

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SATURDAY Special
Editor **Nestor U. Torre** • *Assistant Editor* **Rito P. Asilo**
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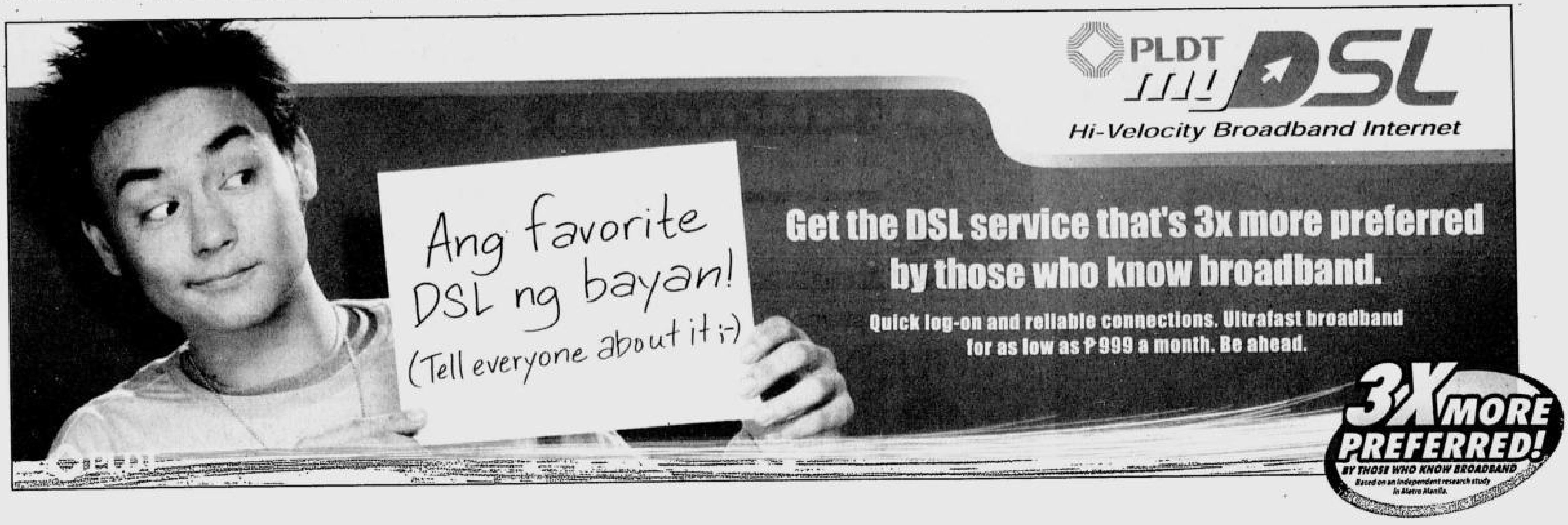
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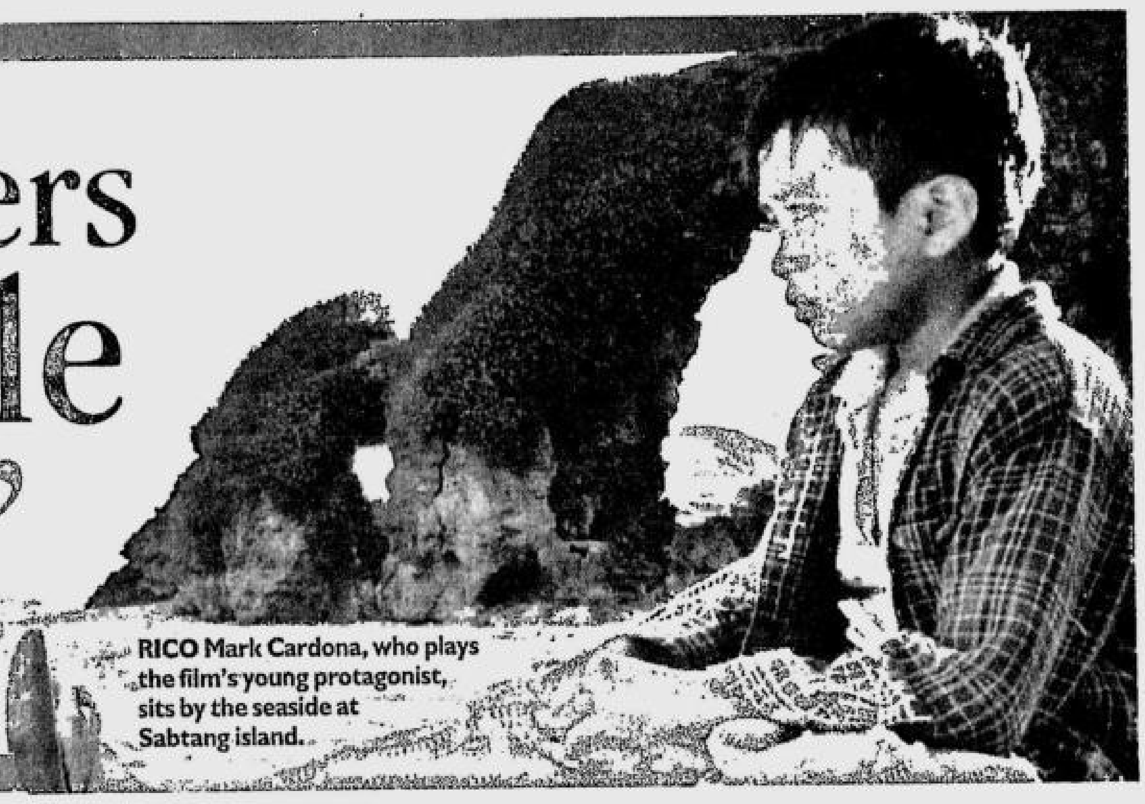
Intrepid filmmakers go the extra mile to shoot 'Kadin'



RICO Mark Cardona, who plays the film's young protagonist, sits by the seaside at Sabtang island.

By Nestor U. Torre

NEXT MONTH, NINE NEW digital films will compete in the third Cinemalaya Alternative Film Festival at the CCP. The hope is that many of these movies by new filmmakers will turn out to be bracingly original and exceptional productions that will further enhance Filipinos' viewing options, as previous Cinemalaya movies have.

Aside from talent and perseverance, the new filmmakers in this year's festival have demonstrated an admirable capacity to go the extra mile to make their movies truly come into their own.

Sterling example

A sterling example of this is the true grit demonstrated by Adolf Alix Jr. and his staff and crew when they "dared" to shoot their entry, "Kadin," in Batanes.

Very few movies have been shot in the country's northernmost island group because of its relative inaccessibility and bad weather-induced rigors.

Despite these and other attendant difficulties, Alix was determined to capture on digital mode the sullen, breathtaking beauty of Batanes—and, more importantly, the "pure" culture of its few residents, which has survived and even flourished through the centuries as few other Philippine minority groups have.

Tourists know Batanes for its iconic stone houses, the architecture of which pays mute but eloquent testament to the many typhoons that have ravaged the island group for eons.

Thus, it was a surprise for us to be told that, increasingly, this is no longer the case, as weather patterns have changed of late.

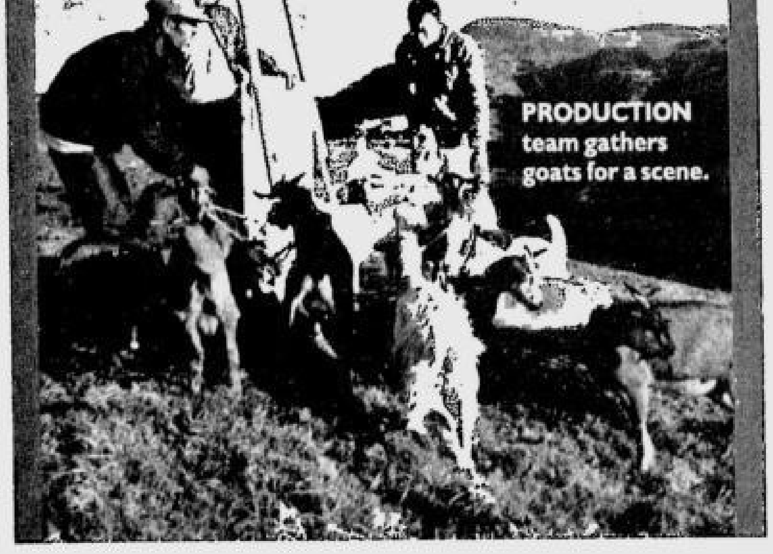
Tourists

So, tourists can visit Batanes more often these days, without fear of being stranded there for weeks by typhoons, as some previous visitors have experienced.

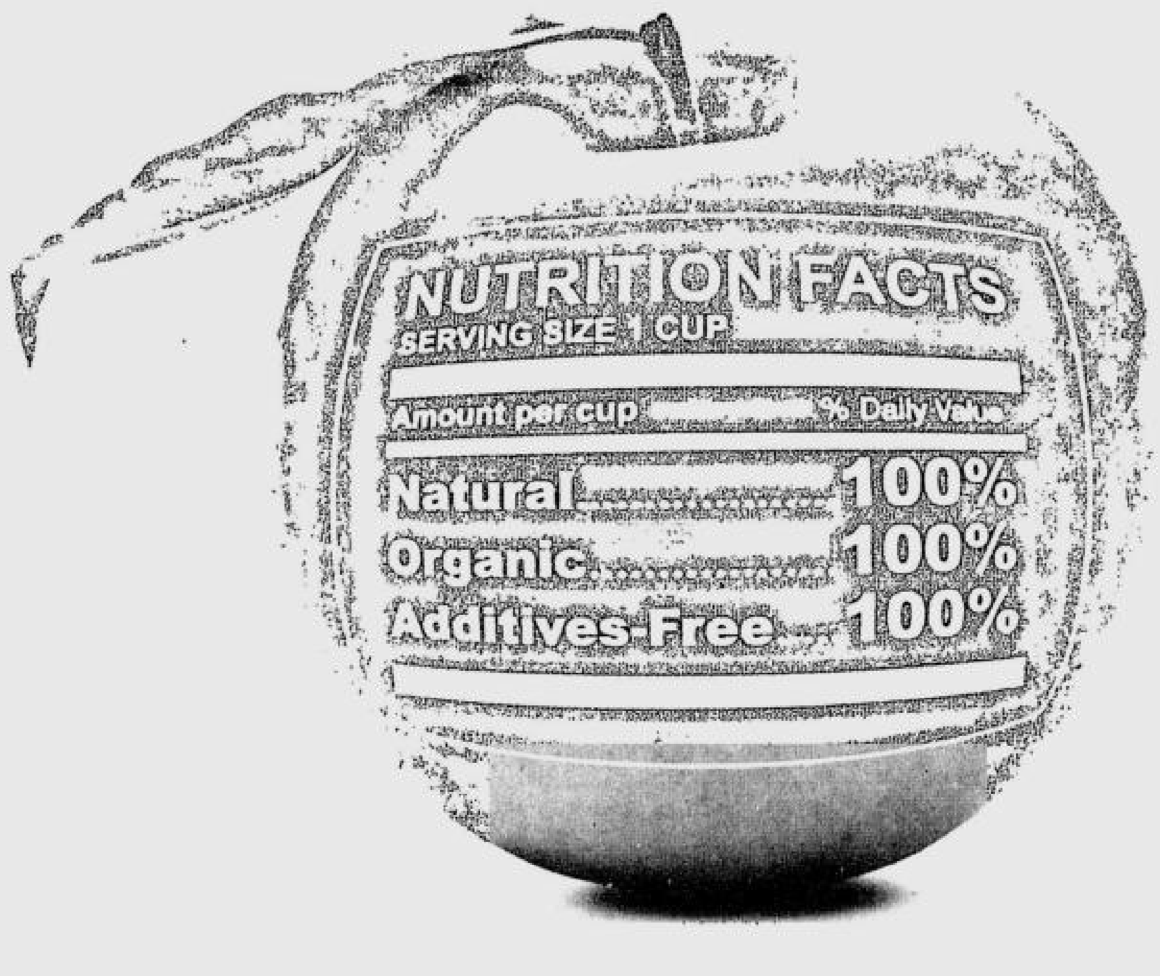
Beyond tourism, however, Batanes beckons because it vivifies the raw beauty and power of nature, with its cliffs, mountains, canyons, tempestuous seas, and cross-current crossings.

The 40-minute crossing between Batanes and Sabtang islands proved to be a particularly daunting experience, as small motorized ferry boats were tossed this way and that by roiling cross currents that made the filmmaking group feel like they were traveling inside a washing machine!

INTREPID/ F4



PRODUCTION team gathers goats for a scene.



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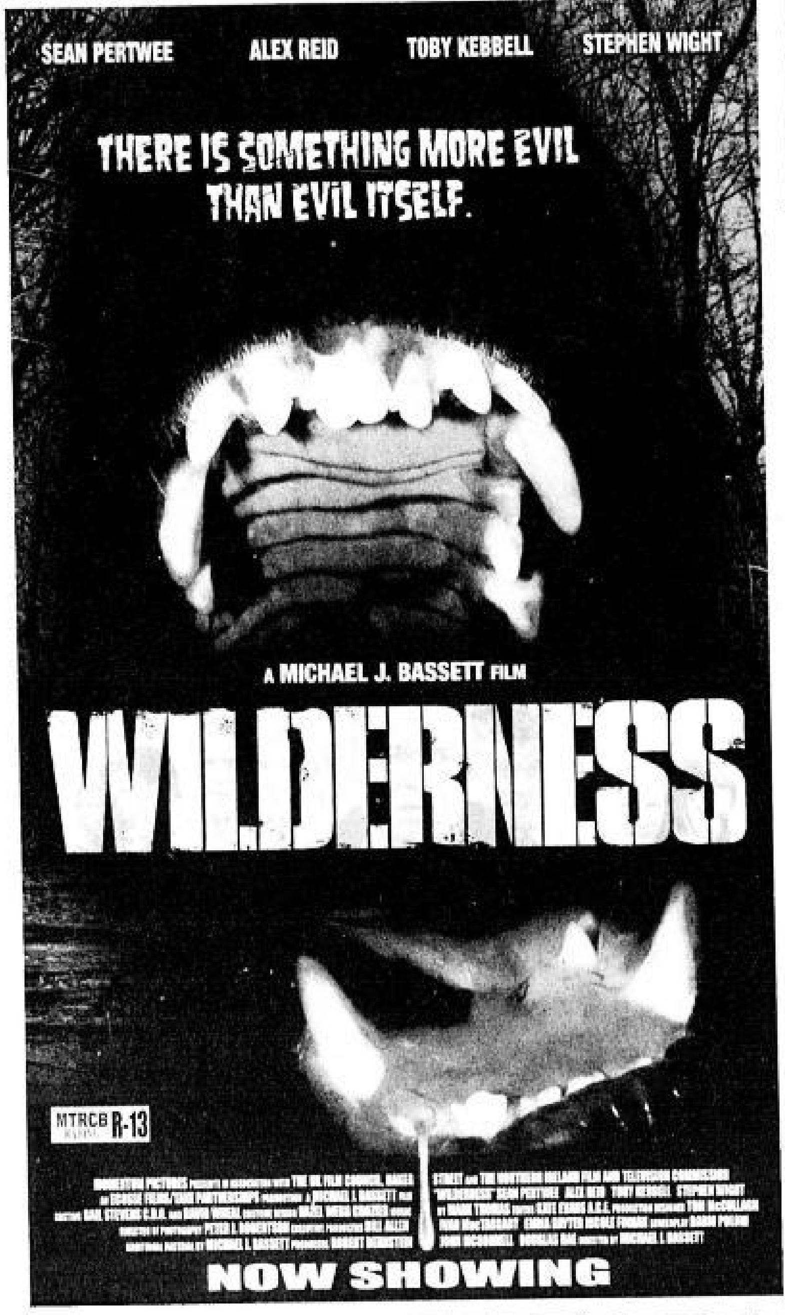
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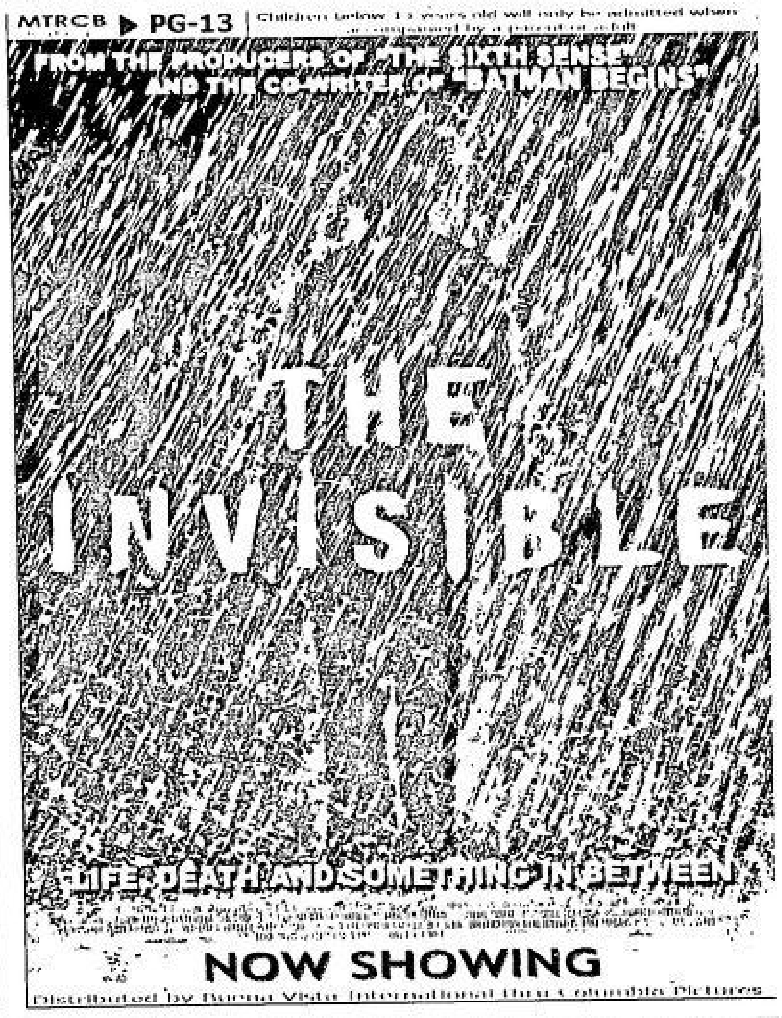
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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE INVISIBLE	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 ANGELS			
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GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 NEXT	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	3 OCEAN'S 13 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE INVISIBLE GUARANTEED SEATS	5 NEXT GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER GUARANTEED SEATS	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 OCEAN'S 13		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 THE CONDEMNED	4 ZODIAC			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	2 FANTASTIC 4: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER	3 NEXT	4 THE INVISIBLE	5 ANGELS		

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Venice film fest honors Bernardo Bertolucci

VENICE, ITALY—BERNARDO BERTOLUCCI will receive an honorary Golden Lion award at this year's Venice Film festival, organizers said recently.

Bertolucci, whose movies include "Last Tango in Paris" and "The Last Emperor," will receive the award during the festival's closing ceremony on Sept. 8.

BERTOLUCCI. His film, "The Last Emperor," won nine Oscars.

Dimension

"Bertolucci is a great Italian filmmaker, who's had the courage to give a cosmopolitan dimension to his personal inspiration," remarked Davide Croff, president of the Venice Biennale, which includes the film festival.

The 66-year-old director is one of Italy's most acclaimed filmmakers. "The Last Emperor"—his 1987 tale on the life of China's last emperor—won nine Oscars, including one for best director.

From his first feature film in 1962 to his last work in 2003, "The Dreamers," Bertolucci has often shown his movies in Venice. As part of the homage, the festival will also feature a restored version of the director's 1970 film, "La Strategia del Ragno" ("The Spider's Stratagem").

The award marks the 75th anniversary of the film festival—the world's oldest. But, because of war and other reasons, the festival was not held every year. The edition opening on Aug. 29 will actually be its 64th. *AP*

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Power

The uncle was blind—both literally and spiritually. He preferred to give authority and power to his own son, who lacked wisdom and a sense of justice. Here is Akrura's instruction to the uncle, followed by the blind recipient's reply:

Akrura told the king: "You have unlawfully usurped the throne from the Pandavas. I advise you to rule the kingdom morally and ethically.

"If you teach your subjects that way, your name and fame will be perpetuated. But, if you do the opposite, you will be unpopular among your subjects, and you'll live in a hellish condition in the next life.

Conditional

"Treat your sons and the Pandavas equally. In this material world, no man remains another person's eternal companion. By chance, we're all assembled as part of a family, society, or community.

But, in the end, when we give up our material bodies, we eventually separate. Therefore, don't be overly affectionate toward family members. Material life is conditional. Control your mind and senses—and live peacefully."

Generous

The blind leader replied: "My dear Akrura, thank you for your generous advice. Unfortunately, I can't accept it. Your instructions are valuable, but they just flicker in my mind, just as the flash of lightning doesn't stay in a fixed cloud."

Due to overwhelming material attachment and ambition, the blind leader remained in darkness—because he couldn't understand and appreciate the valuable wisdom generously given to him!

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NEXT 1:30 / 3:35 / 5:40 / 7:45 / 9:50
OCEAN'S 13 1:50 / 4:30 / 7:10 / 9:50
Globe PLATINUM CINEMA
ANGELS 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
PAANO KITA IIBIGIN 1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 12:05 / 3:20 / 6:35 / 9:50
FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 12:20 / 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00

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1 NEXT 12:25 / 2:30 / 4:35 / 6:40 / 8:45
2 THE INVISIBLE 1:15 / 3:45 / 6:15 / 8:45
3 FANTASTIC 4: SILVER SURFER 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30
4 ANGELS 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20
5 WILDERNESS 12:30 / 2:30 / 4:30 / 6:30 / 8:30

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR • THX 1:30 3:30 5:30 7:30 9:30
2 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
3 THE INVISIBLE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
4 WILDERNESS 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
5 NEXT 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
6 ANGELS 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
7 OCEAN'S 13 1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00
8 indieSine: NUMBALIKDIWA 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30
9 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN? 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
10 PIRATES of the CARIBBEAN 3 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

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2 OCEAN'S 13 12:30 3:15
BORDERTOWN 6:25 10:00
3 THE INVISIBLE 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
4 ANGELS 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
5 NEXT 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
6 WILDERNESS 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 10:00
7 MORENO 12:50 2:40 4:30 6:20 8:10 10:00

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1 WILDERNESS 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00
2 ANGELS 12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00
3 NEXT 11:50 2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10
4 THE INVISIBLE 11:25 1:50 4:15 6:40 9:05
5 OCEAN'S 13 12:30 3:15
POC 3 5:50 9:00
6 FANTASTIC FOUR 1:00 3:05 5:10 7:15
7 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:00 1:00 3:05 5:10 7:15 9:20
8 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN? 1:15 3:50 6:25 9:00

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May 26 - Melvin Campo
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May 28 - Hylyn Tiu
May 29 - Riza Nemil
May 30 - Rowena Wendy Lei
May 31 - Jeremy Rodriguez
June 01 - Roanne Valeria Lim
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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 OCEAN'S 13
4 NEXT
5 THE INVISIBLE
6 ANGELS

PIONEER

1 THE INVISIBLE 1:40 4:00 6:20 8:40
2 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:10 2:15 4:20 6:25 8:30
3 ANGELS 12:00 2:45 5:30 8:15
4 WILDERNESS 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:35 8:40

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4 THE INVISIBLE

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3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 OCEAN'S 13
5 BORDERTOWN
6 SILIP

STARMILLS

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2 ZODIAC
3 PAANO KITA IIBIGIN?
4 ANGELS
5 THE INVISIBLE
6 THE CONDEMNED

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2 ANGELS
3 BORDERTOWN
4 WHISPER
5 OCEAN'S 13
6 LETTER to IWO JIMA

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ANGEL LOCSIN
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ANGEL OF LOVE
JENNYLYN MERCADO PATRICK GARCIA
SWEET RAMOS introducing ELLA CRUZ
MARK REYES

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② NEXT
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③ EIGA SAI
MTRCB R-13/R-13/PG-13
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Blue Spring	5:00 pm
Out of this World	8:00 pm
June 22 (Friday)	
Hotel Hibiscus	2:00 pm
Inochi	5:00 pm
No One's Ark	8:00 pm
June 23 (Saturday)	
Blue	2:00 pm
Kamikaze Girls	5:00 pm
The Stars Converge	8:00 pm
June 24 (Sunday)	
Kamikaze Girls	2:00 pm
Hotel Hibiscus	5:00 pm
Blue Spring	8:00 pm
June 25 (Monday)	
Blue	2:00 pm
Inochi	5:00 pm
Out of this World	8:00 pm
June 26 (Tuesday)	
Shangri-la	2:00 pm
The Stars Converge	5:00 pm
Harmful Insect	8:00 pm

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Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice. Call 633-2227 for more inquiries.

Bruce Willis and daughter team up in dark comedy

MISCHA BARTON AND RUMER Willis have been cast opposite Bruce Willis, Rumer's father, in the dark comedy, "The Sophomore."

In this teenage take on "Chinatown," Barton plays the most popular girl in her Catholic high school. She persuades a sophomore reporter to investigate the theft of SAT exams, but after he reveals that the school's president and top jock are responsible, a more sinister conspiracy emerges.

Sidekick

Rumer Willis plays the troublemaking sidekick of Barton's character. Bruce Willis plays the school's twisted principal, a Desert Storm veteran who can't let go of his glory days. The film will be directed by music video veteran, Brett Simon.

Barton, best known for her role on "The O.C.," recently starred in Luke Kasdan's indie drama, "Don't Fade Away," and is filming Roland Joffe's "Finding t.A.T.u" in Russia. Rumer, 18, Bruce's eldest daughter with Demi Moore, made her screen debut at age 5 in "Now and Then," which starred her mother. She recently appeared in her father's 2005 film, "Hostage." *Reuters*

THE WILLISES. Father and daughter topbill "The Sophomore," described as a teenage take on "Chinatown."

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FANTASTIC FOUR: Rise of the Silver Surfer G 12:20,2:30,4:40, 6:50,9:00	NEXT PG13 1:25,3:40,5:55, 8:10,10:30	THE INVISIBLES PG13 1:20,3:35,5:50, 8:05,10:20
FANTASTIC FOUR: Rise of the Silver Surfer G 12:50,3:00,5:10, 7:20,9:30	OCEAN'S THIRTEEN PG13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	FANTASTIC FOUR: Rise of the Silver Surfer G 1:20,3:30,5:40, 7:50,10:00

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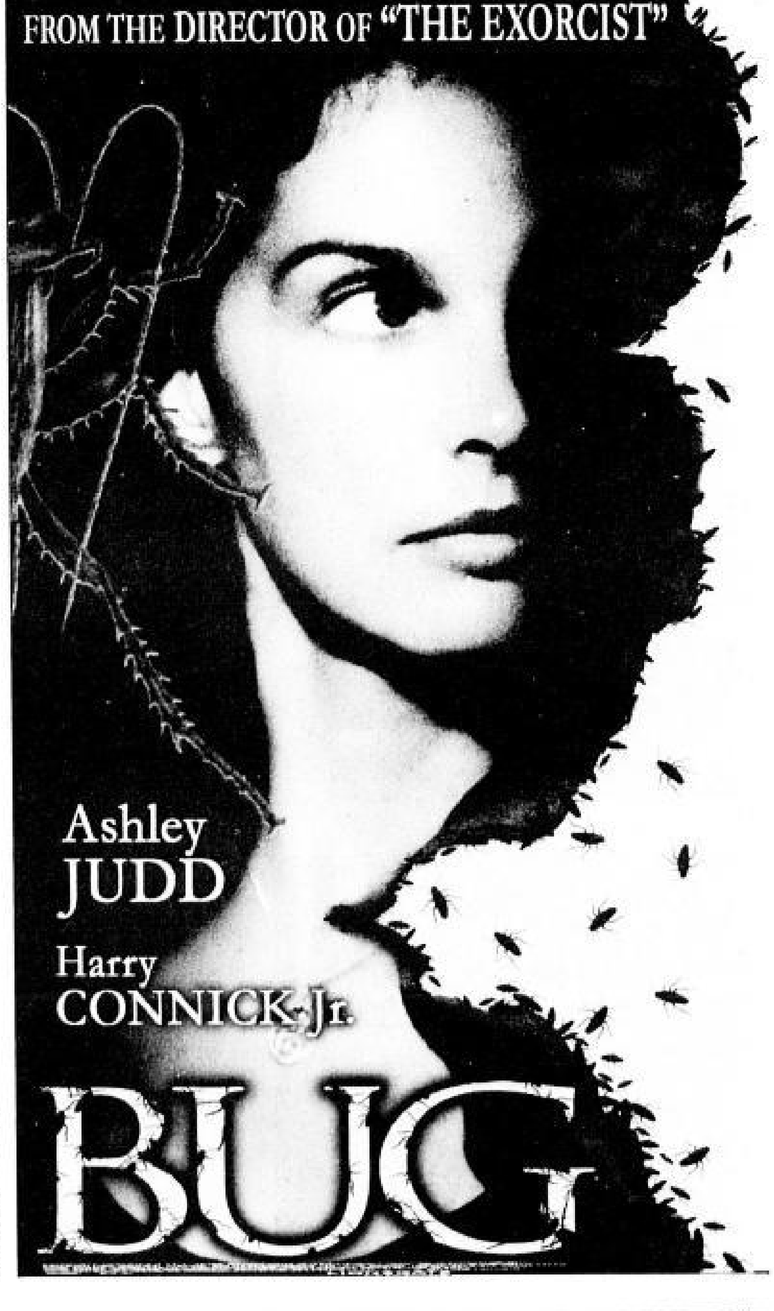
OPENS JUNE 27
THEY LIVE IN YOUR BLOOD
THEY FEED ON YOUR BRAIN
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE EXORCIST"



Carrey plays jailed homosexual in latest comedy

LOS ANGELES—JIM CARREY returns to comedy as a jailed homosexual bent on breaking out in "I Love You, Phillip Morris," produced by French director Luc Besson, Variety reported recently.

True story

Inspired by a true story, the film deals with his character's attempts to rejoin his former cell mate and lover outside the prison, and is presented as Steven Spielberg's "Catch Me If You Can" meets "Brokeback Mountain."

The 45-year-old Canadian actor broke the mega-fame barrier in 1996 when his rubber-faced character in "The Mask" turned him into the first Hollywood star to pass the $20-million-per-movie barrier.

His recent movie, "The Number 23," however, grossed a meager $35 million at the North American box office—a far cry from the $240 million his top earner, "Bruce Almighty," grossed in 2003. *AFP*

CARREY. Gender-bending role.

Intrepid filmmakers ...

From page F1

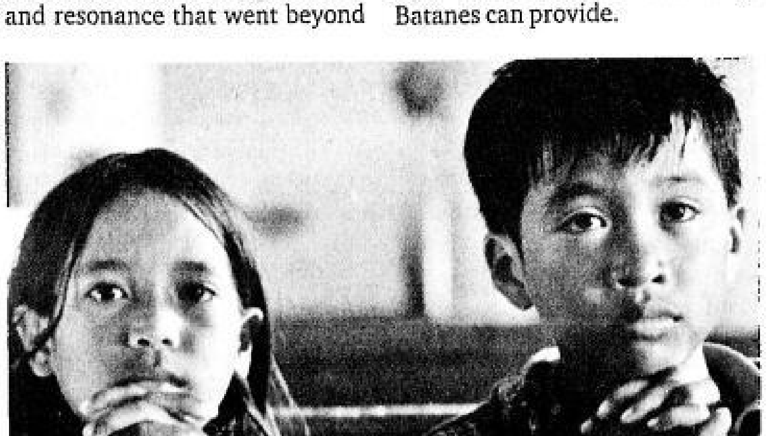
Once on Sabtang island, other difficulties had to be faced and dealt with, but the group forged on, going from one shooting day to the next with great spirit and resolve.

Lost goat

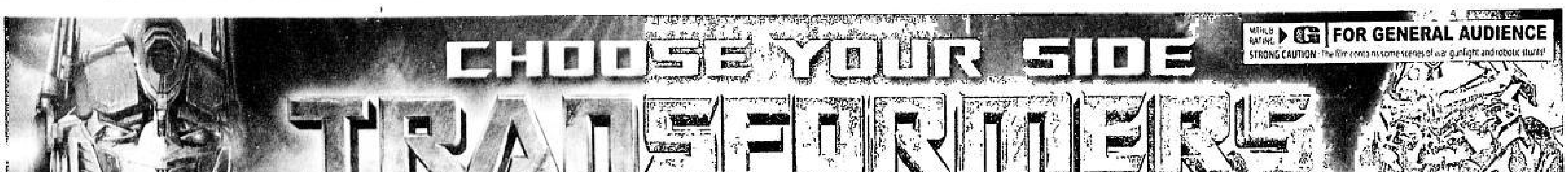
Slowly, but surely, their movie's story about a boy looking all over the island for his lost goat took on a textured significance and resonance that went beyond its simple storyline.

In time, the island's raw elements and the fortitude of its populace fleshed the story out with themes and intimations that summed up the essence of Batanes and its hardy people.

Despite the long and difficult shoot, Alix and his staffers agreed that the difficulties had all been worth it, as their finished film scintillates and bristles with original, iconic images that only Batanes can provide.



THE FILM'S young leads are played by Monica Joy Camarillas (left) and Rico Mark Cardona.



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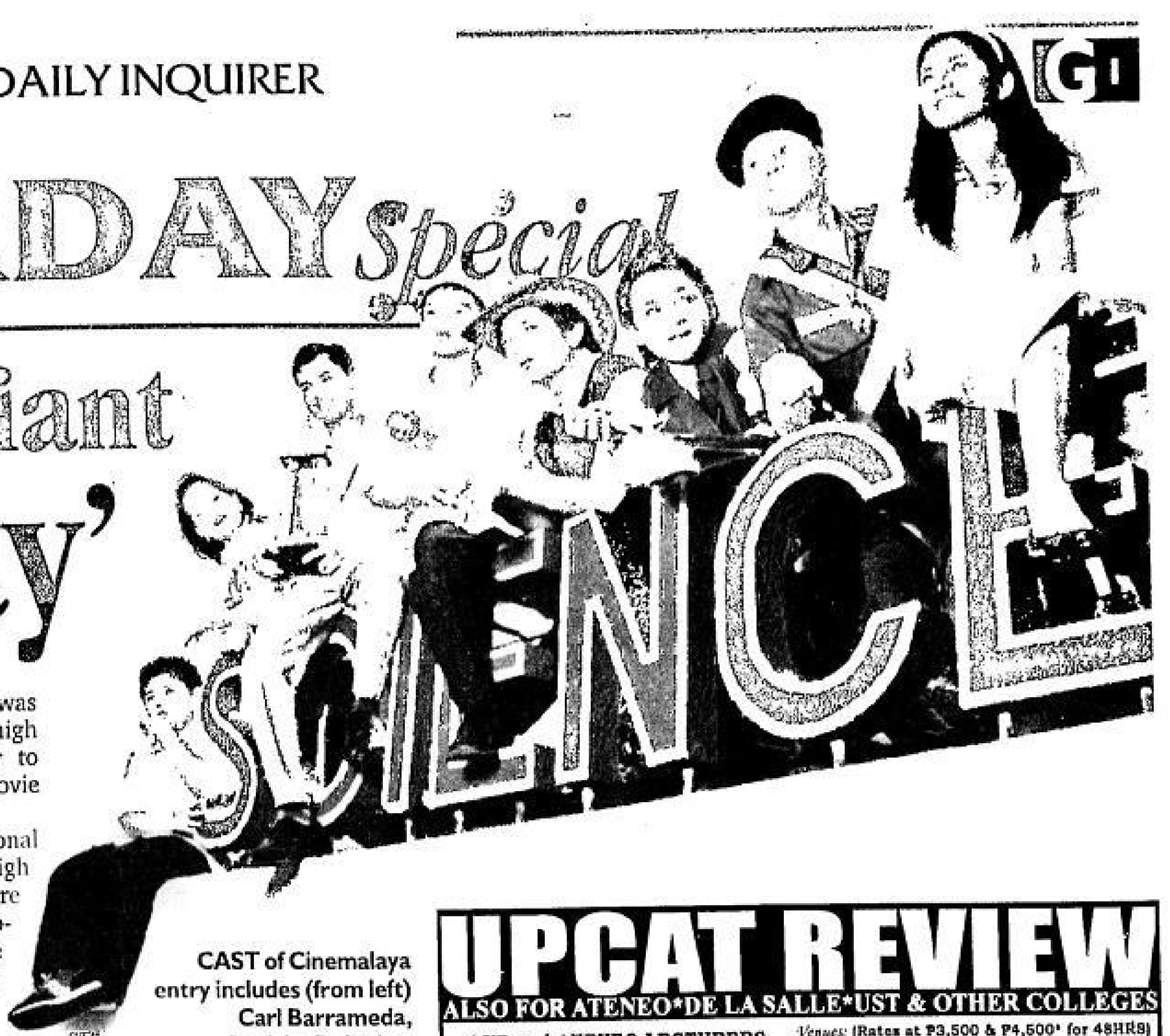
Solito showcases brilliant young finds in 'Pisay'



CAST of Cinemalaya entry includes (from left) Carl Barrameda, Annicka Dolonius, Gammy Lopez, Elijah Castillo, Alfred Labatos, EJ Jallorina, Jonathan Neri and Shayne Fajutagana.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—ACCLAIMED director Auraeus Solito recently e-mailed us some sneak peek photos of the cast of his latest film, "Pisay."

He wrote that about 200 kids auditioned for the film inspired by his student years at the Philippine Science High School, affectionately nicknamed by its students and alumni as Pisay.

"Eight brilliant kids made it to the cast," Auraeus shared.

Lucky eight

The filmmaker behind the much-lauded "Ang Pagdadalaga ni (The Blossoming of) Maximo Oliveros" briefly described his lucky eight: "Matt (Carl Barrameda, formerly of 'Going Bulilit'); Wena (Annicka Dolonius, half-Swedish niece of Robin Padilla); Rom (Gammy Lopez, twin brother of 'Maximo's' Nathan Lopez);

Minggoy (Elijah Castillo, Singapore best actor award winner for 'Pepot Artista'); Daki (Alfred Labatos, another 'Going Bulilit' alumnus); Euri (EJ Jallorina, also from 'Going Bulilit'); Andy (newcomer Jonathan Neri), and Liway (Shayne Fajutagana, a true Pisay graduate who recently graduated with honors and made it to UP's College of Medicine."

We got Auraeus to reveal who his alter ego is in the movie: "Euri was based on me," he shared.

The film's synopsis: Eight students make it to the country's premier science high school during the politically volatile '80s. These gifted students come from all over the Philippines.

The Philippine Science High School was created to provide an education that focuses on the sciences. Those who make it are hailed as future leaders of science and technology.

Reunions

Auraeus elaborated: "I was from Pisay's batch '86. When I traveled around because of 'Maximo Oliveros,' I had reunions with batch mates who now live in North America and Europe. One of them went into exile in the Netherlands for political reasons. I'd always wondered why she suddenly disappeared during my senior year. I got my answer when she and her family watched 'Maxi' at the Rotterdam International Film Festival!"

Beautiful tales

He added, "My friend's story inspired me so much that I e-mailed my batch mates in our Pisay86 yahoogroup—then, they started telling me their stories. Many beautiful tales came up, and they inspired me to write 'Pisay.' Eventually, I asked Henry Grageda to write the screenplay."

Asked if it was easy for him to make a semiautobiographical movie, Solito answered,"It was hard. I discovered that high school movies are not easy to make—plus, this is a period movie set in the '80s.

"It looks like fun, but personal movies can be intense. High school life isn't easy. There are painful moments and profound emotions you struggle to understand. I almost gave up."

"Pisay" will premiere at the Third Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival at the CCP next month.

E-mail rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com, and read his blog at www.inquirerbloggers.net/nepalesreport.

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FREEMAN AND CARRELL. Topbill sequel to Tom Shadyac's "Bruce Almighty."

God and animals share spotlight in 'Evan Almighty'

LOS ANGELES—IN HOLLYWOOD, long considered an encampment of liberal-minded show biz sinners, God has found an ally in director Tom Shadyac, whose big-budget comedy, "Evan Almighty," debuted yesterday.

Throughout its rich history, Hollywood has made popular biblical movies, such as 1956's "The Ten Commandments," about Moses leading the Jews from Egypt. But, the studios are often criticized by religious and conservative groups for pushing the boundaries of good taste and morality in mainstream movies.

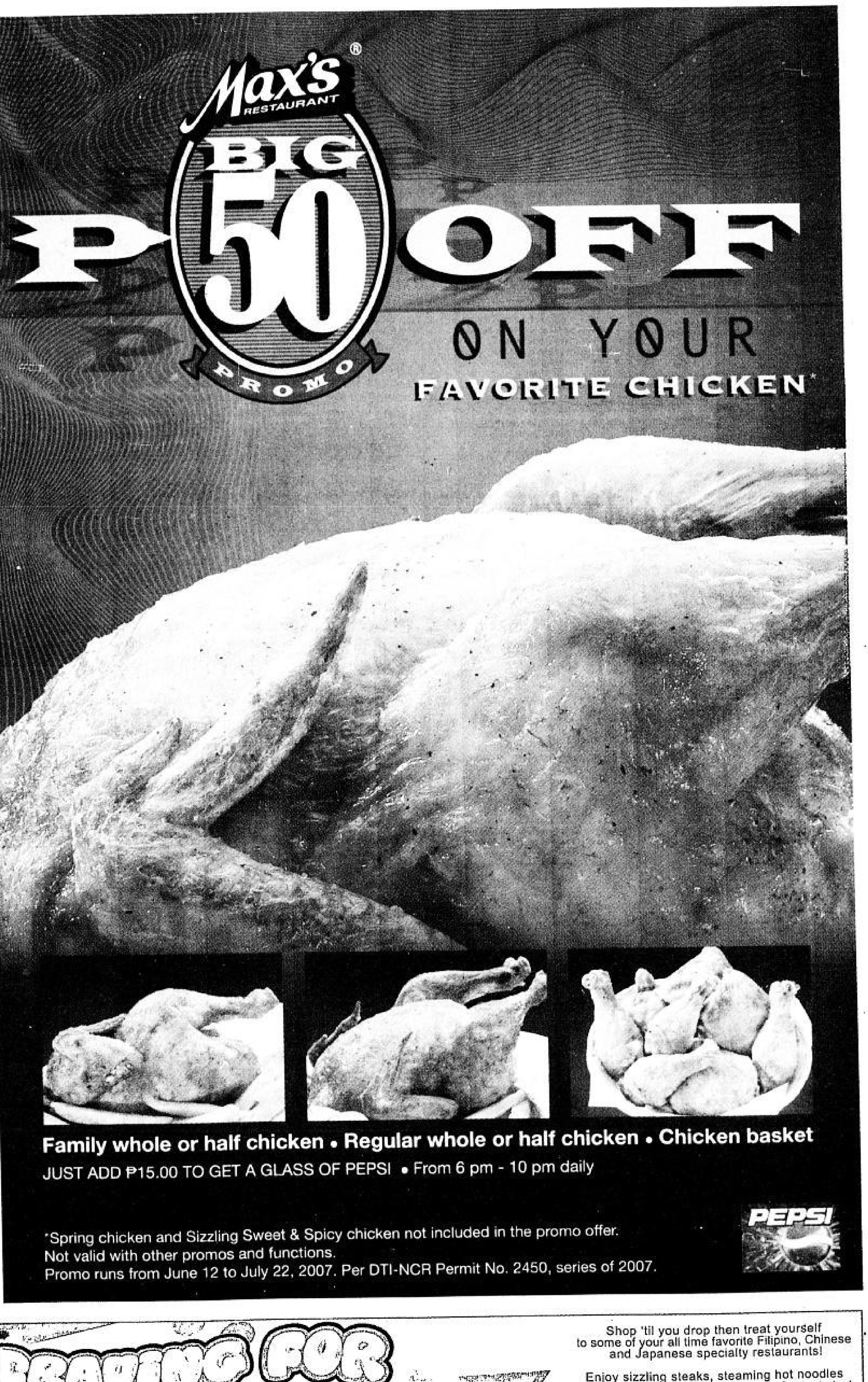
Honesty

In "Evan Almighty," those groups have nothing to fear. The politicians in Washington, however, catch a lot of flak about honesty, faith, and protecting the environment.

"Evan Almighty" modernizes the tale of Noah's Ark and the biblical flood that destroyed all of humanity—except for God's chosen, Noah, his family members, and the animals he loaded two-by-two onto his hand-built ark.

The film is a follow-up to Shadyac's 2003, $485-million global box-office smash, "Bruce Almighty," which starred Jim Carrey as a TV reporter to whom God (Morgan Freeman) grants his almighty power—only for Bruce to learn it's not so easy being God.

Shadyac said Carrey didn't want to be in the follow-up because the character of Bruce learned all he needed in the first film. So, the director hired Steve Carell, star of hit TV show, "The Office," who played Bruce's rival in the first film, and whose dry wit contrasts with Carrey's wildly physical humor. *Reuters*



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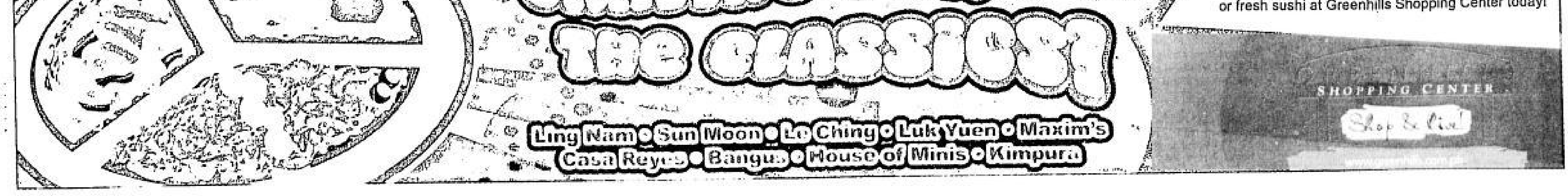
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A heaven for spa lovers

MULTI AWARD-WINNING DEVARANA SPA, the heavenly spa brand originated by the Dusit Group, has opened its doors at the newly refurbished second floor of Dusit Hotel Nikko overlooking the posh swimming pool area and Thai inspired multi-purpose pavilion.

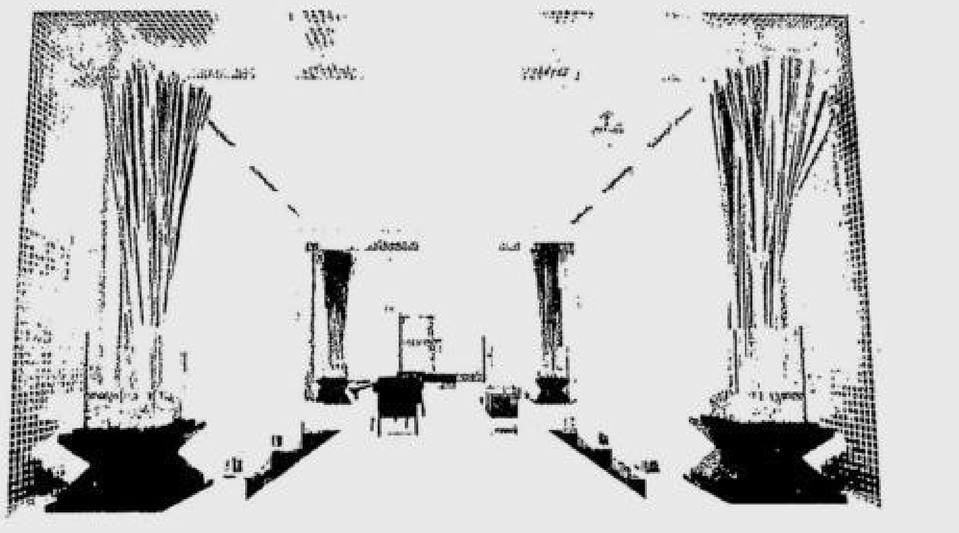
Ideally located in the city's premier Makati business and shopping district, Devarana Spa, is bringing contemporary luxury to the local cosmopolitan culture. Designed in a contemporary Thai style depicting its exclusive and unique heavenly garden concept, as described in the ancient Thai literature. Peaceful, tranquil ambience ensures that guests can feel they've retreated into a sanctuary - an anti-stress and relaxing environment like no other.

This 723-square meter luxury spa features six spacious treatment rooms - two standard rooms, two double suites, one corner suite and one grand suite, with private en-suite facilities. There is also a dedicated area for manicure and pedicure services, and the Devarana Gallery, carrying the complete Devarana proprietary product line - exclusively designed products for practical use to relax and beautify.

Prepare to be pampered with a superb variety of East-meets-West treatments; massages, facials, body treatments, water treatments, beauty treatments and spa packages, complemented by marine cosmetics Phytomer as well as herbal preparations, using fresh, natural ingredients. Devarana Spa uses only the finest quality cold-pressed oils combined with specially formulated pure essential oils. Reliable, professionally trained therapists will ensure that guests will experience a high level of well deserved pampering.

Visit the new 'Garden in Heaven' at Dusit Hotel Nikko, Manila and let Devarana Spa welcome you. Guests may avail of the Annual Membership Program for only P15,000, plus 20 percent discount on any a la carte spa treatments. This introductory price is offered until the end of August 2007!

Open daily from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m. For inquiries, call 867-3333 or 818-7081.



'Nights of Wine and Fine Dining' at The Tivoli

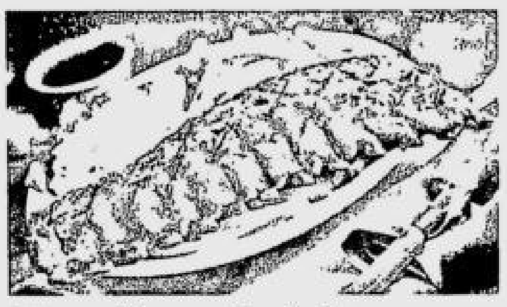
MANDARIN ORIENTAL'S signature fine-dining restaurant The Tivoli, brings to wine and food lovers its Nights of Wine and Fine Dining event on June 29, from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Indulge in The Tivoli's "seven capital sins", a beguiling seven-course epicurean wine-dinner at P2,980+++ per person, as prepared by The Tivoli chef Stefan Trepp and his team of connoisseurs paired with limitless servings of four exquisite French wines and a dessert champagne.

CHEF Stefan Trepp

Held every last Friday of the month, the Nights of Wine and Fine Dining event for June is held in cooperation with Le Cellier French Wine Selection, wherein an exquisite dinner-wine menu featuring truffles, include: Cauliflower and green pea salad with smoked duck breast, served with walnut ice cream and black summer truffle, paired with Chateau Mylord 2005 - Entre - Deux - Mers, Bordeaux; Cappuccino of sweet potatoes with truffle foam and Open-faced prawn lasagna with truffle espuma, complemented by Macon Villages 2005 - Ferraud & Fils, Burgundy; Lemongrass and ginger sorbet served with truffle caviar, Braised black Wagyu cheek with goat cheese polenta and olive oil puree served with fresh truffle shavings, matched with Cotes du Rhone Villages 2005 - La Campagne Perchee, Rhone; Gaperon cheese with red wine-infused sweet mustard and walnut crumble with black truffle flakes, paired with Chiroubles 2004 - Ferraud & Fils, Beaujolais; capped off with Armagnac-flamed strawberries with orange-scented genoise served with truffle meringue, paired with Champagne Christophe - Tradition, Champagne.

The monthly Nights of Wine and Fine Dining at The Tivoli, is designed to give discerning diners a chance to learn the intricacies of wine-making and drinking in a relaxed and sophisticated environment with a leading wine authority. The next Nights of Wines and Fine Dining event is on July 27.

For reservations and enquiries, call The Tivoli at 750 8888 extension 2431 to 2433.



Tony Roma's delivery, party catering services

TONY ROMA'S INTRODUCES THEIR TAKEOUT, delivery and party catering services. Delivery service is within Alabang business district and residential nearest their Alabang Town Center branch and Makati business district and residential apartments and subdivisions nearest their Glorietta 4 branch. Party catering is also being handled by these two branches but has a widen territorial coverage, basically the key cities of Manila, Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Quezon, Makati, Pasig, Pasay and Municipality of San Juan and Taguig. Delivery services are available at the following hours: 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. from Mondays to Saturdays; 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Enjoy as much as 20 percent discount when you call us for delivery now. Get 10 percent discount if you order from P1,500 up to P2,000. 15 percent if your order from P2,001 to P6,000 and enjoy 20 percent if you purchased more than P6,000. This special privilege expires till Aug. 31 only. For additional information, call 757-1925/6 (Glorietta) or 771-1388 and 771-1788 (Alabang).

Vive la France at InterContinental Manila

DINING OPTIONS ARE MORE EXCITING THIS MONTH OF JUNE AT InterContinental Manila with French ingredients included in the menus. Visit Prince Albert Rotisserie and dine healthy with its special a la carte menu of French asparagus dishes. Executive chef Patrick Fournes combines French asparagus with other interesting choice ingredients. Sumptuous menu items include Shitake and Asparagus Casserole with Lemon and Garden Thyme Jus, Warm Asparagus with Green Marsala Sauce, Chilean Sea Bass and Asparagus with Green Parmesan Crumbs and Maltaise Orange Sauce and Roasted rack of Lamb with Dry Nuts Sauce, Asparagus, and Garlic Croquettes. For the health-conscious, take comfort in knowing that asparagus has absolutely no fat, no cholesterol and is low in sodium. Spend a relaxing evening with friends at the Gambrinus Bar while feasting on a wide array of French wines and cheeses: Good live music entertainment and a spectacular view of the poolside garden are added treats. This French gourmet eat-as-much-as-you-can offer is available daily from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. the entire month. Please call 815-9711 for reservations.

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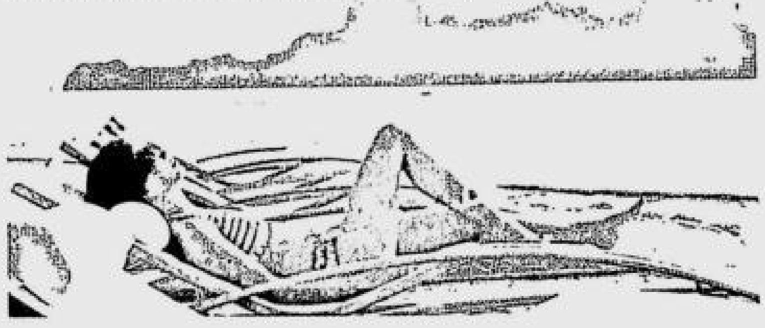
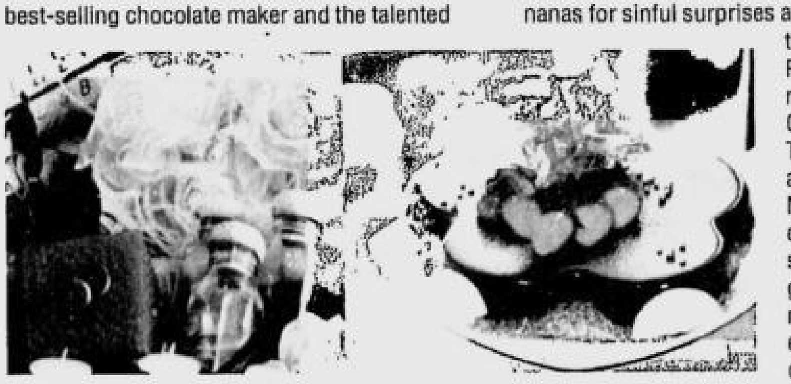


The blushing bride at Bellevue

IT'S TIME FOR BLUSHING BRIDES TO BLOOM as they march down the aisle. The Bellevue Hotel, the favorite wedding and events venue in Alabang, treats brides to a shower of beauty, hair and body treatments at the Bellevue Spa Club. Choose from the One Day or Two Day Bride Pampering Package and live the life of a princess. Available for the whole month of June. From the world's best-selling chocolate maker and the talented pastry chefs at Alabang's ultimate food Mecca comes Hershey Ultimate Indulgence, The Bellevue Hotel's Cake of the Month for June. A rich chocolate cake made with soft centered crème brulee and raspberry mousse glazed with melted Hershey's chocolate, this cake is meant to draw oohs and aahs because of it is loaded with chocolatey goodness in decadent proportions. Go bananas for sinful surprises and cool concoctions at the Bellevue Hotel's Poolside for the whole month of June with its Go Bananas Promo. The ultimate food paradise south to Metro Manila lets guests catch the tail-end of the summer with outrageous servings of banana splits at discounted prices. For inquiries, call 771-8181.



Rejuvenate at the Pearl Farm Beach Resort

IT'S THE SEASON TO GIVE YOURSELF SOME "me" time. The time of the year you would want to cuddle up in a soft, comfortable bed with a hot drink, while prepping yourself up for a good massage. It's the time to get away from the hustle and bustle of the metro, leave all the noise and traffic behind, and whisk yourself off to a haven that will cater to your every whim and desire... Pearl Farm Beach Resort is just the place to go to! Pearl Farm Beach Resort offers a "Rainy Season" promo package that will run until Sept. 30. It's the perfect gift to give yourself - a relaxing stay at one of the luxurious resorts in the country. This is the place where the only obligation you have is to be lazy while you let our staff serve you your heart's cravings. Don't stress yourself, book a room now and indulge in the rejuvenating atmosphere that can only be found in Pearl Farm Beach Resort. And they promise you: no quotas and year-end performance reports needed.

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NOW SHOWING

Well-meaning trilogy slips and soars

By Rito P. Asilo

"Angels"

D: Gina Alajar ("Angel of Mine"), Jose Dantes III ("Daddy's Angel"), Mark Reyes ("Angel of Love")

S: Angel Locsin, Marvin Agustin, Jennylyn Mercado, Patrick Garcia

"ANGELS," A TRILOGY ABOUT ANGELS, both heaven sent and earth-bound, wins points for its noble intentions: First-time movie directors, Dingdong Dantes and Gina Alajar, display a confident grasp of the cinematic medium in their respective episodes.

LAGUNSAD AND LOCSIN. Topbill Alajar's episode, "Angel of Mine."

In Alajar's "Angel of Mine," police reporter Angie (Angel Locsin) finds herself playing surrogate mother to her former nanny's smart-aleck daughter, Gelay (Eunice Lagunsad), after the elderly woman (Malu de Guzman) meets her tragic fate in an accident.

GARCIA AND MERCADO. Love conquers all.

But, career has always been Angie's priority—and raising a kid is farthest from her mind! She has to come to grips with her father's death and her far-from-ideal relationship with her alcoholic mother (Pinky Amador).

Dantes' "Daddy's Angel" follows Ruben (Marvin Agustin), an ex-convict who comes home after serving time for killing his departed wife's rapist (Paolo Paraiso).

Imagine his shock when he meets 9-year-old Angelo (Nash Aguas), who, for Ruben, is a bitter reminder of his dark past.

As Angelo pines for his "father's" love and acceptance, Ruben remembers a long-forgotten promise he's sworn to fulfill.

In Mark Reyes' "Angel of Love," rich boy Jude (Patrick Garcia) meets *jologs* rock singer, Bianang (Jennylyn Mercado). In the trilogy's most underrealized segment, a heaven-sent angel (Ella Cruz) plays Cupid to Jude and Bianang to earn a silver star in heaven. Do they get their happily-ever-after ending? Guess.

Alajar makes full use of her thespic sensitivity to translate a weak story into an affecting character study. Despite her episode's overwrought but underwritten characters, she manages to rise above the script's limitations.

She displays flashes of brilliance by vividly establishing the characters' relationships—and, given her material's overt weaknesses, that's no mean feat!

For his part, Reyes attempts to cook up a light rom-com brew that irritates more than it entertains.

Except for the talented but underutilized Garcia (who deserves to do more challenging roles), the performances of the movie's usually reliable cast border on caricature.

Most successful in the trilogy is Dantes' episode: Agustin, Aguas and Jaclyn Jose (as Ruben's mother) make a formidable acting threesome.

Agustin trades thespic blows with Jose and Aguas, and demonstrates how much his skill as an actor has grown through the years. Dingdong and his cast bring Gina Tagasa and Agnes de Guzman's script to seething, throbbing life—and prove that, sometimes, the best guardian angels are earth-bound mortals!

AGUAS AND AGUSTIN. Trade thespic blows in Dantes' powerful segment.

Advocacy for babies

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CONtinues to push for the full implementation of Executive Order No. 51, known as the National Code of Marketing for breastmilk substitutes, supplements and related products.

The DOH has been waging this fight for 30 years since the code was signed in 1986 by then President Corazon C. Aquino.

Resistance

The code's regulation to ban advertising and promotion of milk substitutes for children up to 2 years old met strong resistance from the Pharmaceutical and Healthcare Association of the Philippines (PHAP), which successfully obtained a temporary restraining order from the Supreme Court on the strength of the argument of restraint on freedom of trade.

The TRO practically tied the hands of the DOH and the government in promoting exclusive breastfeeding to infants and children up to two years old. The TRO is still in effect today.

Campaign

In February this year, the special UN rapporteur on the right to food, Jean Ziegler of the UN Human Rights Council, said he was appalled at the current expensive media campaign supporting milk formula to protect milk companies' huge profits.

The aggressive marketing practices involve claims that breastfeeding can not be done by the majority of mothers, and that milk substitutes raise healthy, smart, and happy babies.

In 2003, the World Health organization estimated that 16,000 Filipino children under the age of 5 died as a result of improper feeding practices.

WHO will celebrate World Breastfeeding Week from Aug. 1 to 7, and World Breastfeeding Day on Aug. 1. This year's theme: "Breastfeeding: One hour after birth saves a million babies!"

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Young talents make their bid for big-screen stardom

By Nestor U. Torre

EVERY FILM SEASON, SCORES OF STELLAR wannabes storm Hollywood's gates for their crack at stardom, but only a few are able to convince producers that they have what it takes to entice moviegoers to watch their films. This season, those chosen few include:

Emma Roberts, the young star of "Nancy Drew." If the face looks familiar, that's because Emma is a near lookalike of her famous aunt, Julia, still Hollywood's top female draw—even after having gone on extended maternity leave to give birth, first to twins, then to the spanking-new baby boy who's the latest addition to Julia and her cinematographer-hubby's burgeoning family.

Potential

When Emma first made known her interest in acting some years ago, she was still an awkward adolescent. But, producers saw her potential—and her thespic genes weren't to be sniffed at, either—so, they started looking around for the perfect role for her stellar launch.

"Nancy Drew" definitely fills the bill, because the character of the young sleuth combines vivacity, streetsmarts, and a yen for excitement and danger that could make Emma an "overnight" sensation, like "Pretty Woman" transformed her Aunt Julia—from winsome starlet to winning star!

Justin Long gets his big break in "Die Hard 4.0," in which he shares scenes with *the* Bruce Willis. Willis' iconic character, John McClane, is embroiled in a desperate attempt to save the United States from a cyber terrorist plot, and he teams up with Long's character, Matt Farnell, a computer hacker who's suspected of being involved in terrorist activities.

As it turns out, the veteran cop realizes that the young hacker is indispensable due to his computer skills and technical brilliance—and together, they make a fine, if unlikely, terrorist-busting team.

Make-or-break production

Long's other film credits include "Jeepers Creepers," "Raising Genius," and "The Breakup," but he regards "Die Hard 4.0" as a make-or-break production for him, because he gets to make a lot of action and thespic points in it—and he's been a Bruce Willis fan for years!

For his part, **Justin Chatwin** first impressed viewers as Tom Cruise's rebellious son in "War of the Worlds." Building on that attention-calling debut, Justin has played other interesting film roles—but none has been as important as his latest big-screen outing, as Nick, the central character in the current screener, "The Invisible."

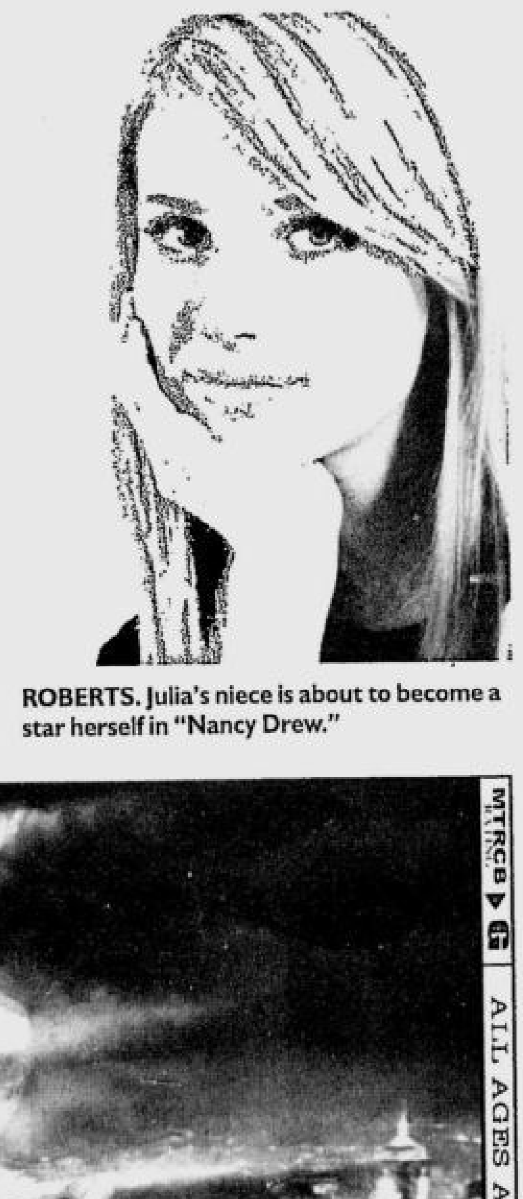
The new supernatural thriller is beguiling viewers, because it plays around with standard concepts of time, of life and death, and of what is and what merely *appears* to be.

Essence

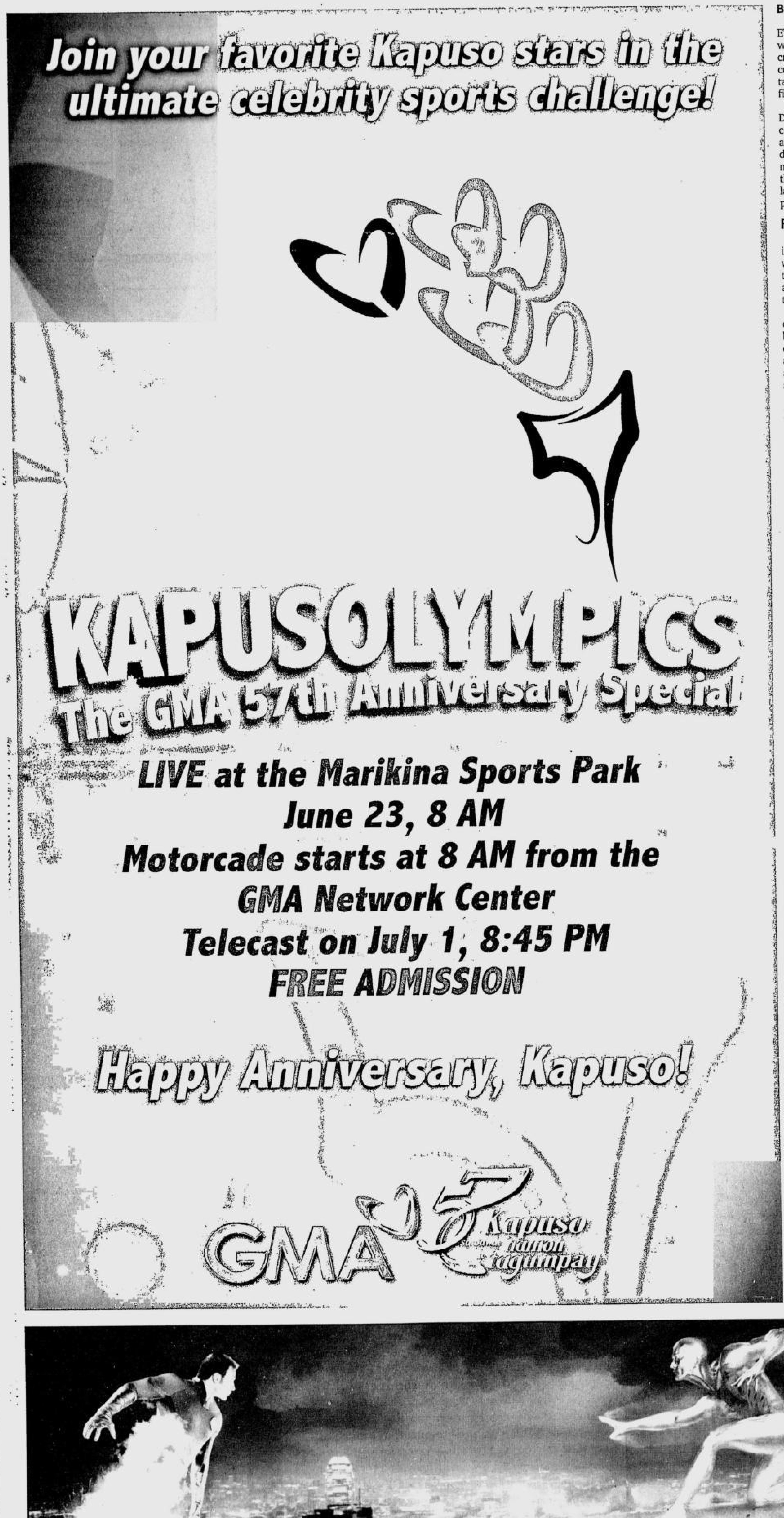
For Justin, the greatest challenge was to play somebody who is invisible—without losing the essence of his flesh-and-blood persona.

Finally, in the field of animated features, "Meet the Robinsons" fields a new voice talent in the role of young inventor Wilbur Robinson. He's **Wesley Singerman**, who cut his voice-acting teeth by playing Charlie Brown in several TV productions.

Wesley hopes that he'll soon get to play similarly interesting and pivotal roles in live-action features, as well!



ROBERTS. Julia's niece is about to become a star herself in "Nancy Drew."



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SATURDAY *Special*

Honeymoon is over for some erring *Hollywood stars*

Only a few years ago, notoriety appeared to be the accepted mirror image of popularity

By Nestor U. Torre

IN THE PHILIPPINES, MANY CELEBRITIES feel they can get away with anything, just because they're stars.

In Hollywood, the situation used to be pretty much the same, a long honeymoon period during which fans invariably forgave stars' excesses.

Recently, however, the US viewing public appears to have had its fill of erring stars' shenanigans, and have been expressing their displeasure in no uncertain terms.

Guilty celebrities

Similarly, government and law enforcement officers have been laying down the law in particularly forceful ways, compelling guilty celebrities to realize that their happy-go-lucky days—and honeymoon period—are definitely over.

In recent months, celebrities have gotten fired for making discriminatory or otherwise unsavory remarks on radio and TV. Popular actor Isaiah Washington was eased out of his TV show for uttering a homophobic slur.

Veteran radio commentator Don Imus was fired for insulting young black women. And Lindsey Lohan has been rapped for a plethora of perceived excesses *and* insufficiencies by producers and fans alike.

Previously, Mel Gibson was chided for launching into some drunken anti-Semitic diatribes. Other stars like Britney Spears have gone into rehab to turn their lives around, for fear that their careers would suffer the consequences of their blithe disdain.

Behind bars

And, most recently, *the* Paris Hilton has effectively been pushed off her pedestal for breaking her probation for drunken driving and has landed on a very hard place—behind bars!

Thus, in no uncertain terms, has the previously "star-spoiling" American public decided to force celebrities to realize that, like other people, they too have rules to follow, and duties as role models to observe—or their stellar careers could be at risk.

This is a major change from the situation only a few years ago, when notoriety appeared to be the accepted mirror image of popularity.

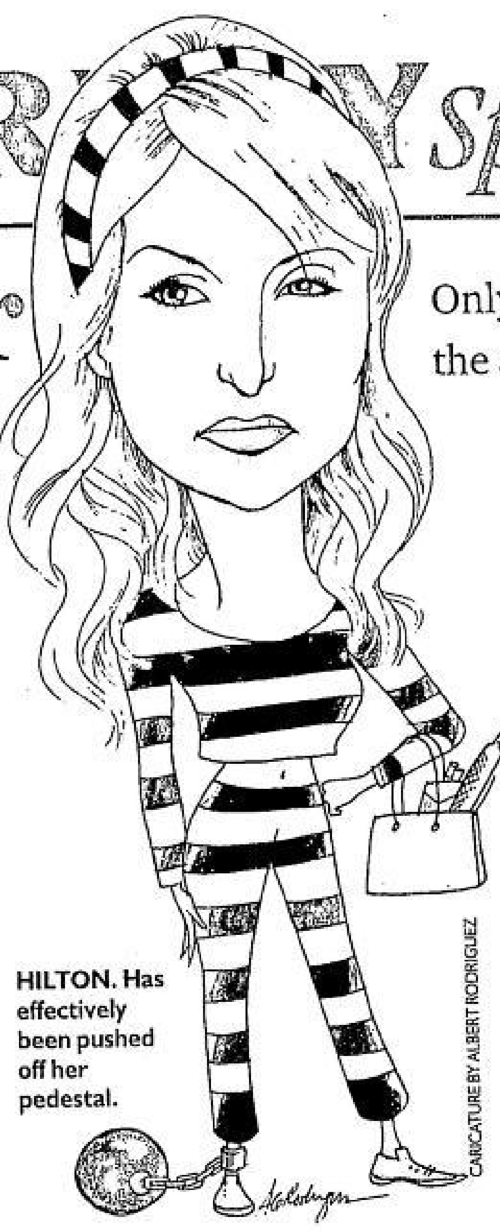
Hilton is a case in point: She used to break rules with impunity, and she even "starred" in a shocking sex video, and yet, she wasn't censured for her excesses.

This time around, however, her infraction has resulted in her being slapped with a jail sentence that some people regard as particularly harsh.

And yet, law enforcement officers have stuck to their stringent resolve, apparently determined to knock some sense into celebrities' ego-inflated noggins.

What accounts for this major shift from softie to strict enforcer? Some analysts point to the emergence of websites, blogs, and other Internet

HONEYMOON/ H3



HILTON. Has effectively been pushed off her pedestal.

CARICATURE BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

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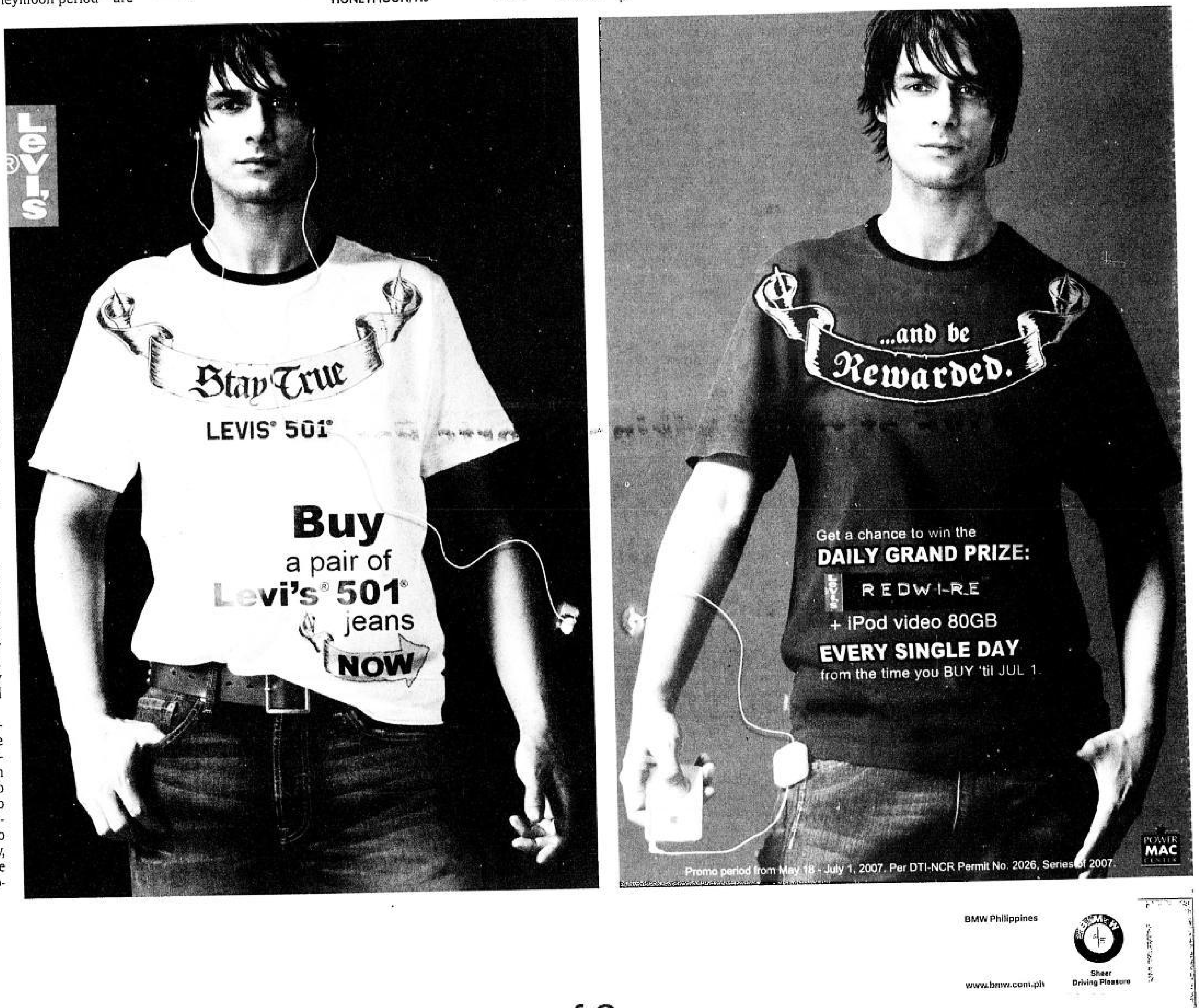

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DIRECTOR'S CUT

Easy does it for Mel Chionglo

By Ronald G. Mangubat

MOVIE INSIDERS AGREE THAT Mel Chionglo is one of local cinema's smartest storytellers. The amiable director of such films as "Lagarista," "Lahar," "Xerex," and "Twilight Dancers," gets along well with his cast and crew, never shouts, and is very approachable.

Chionglo, who started directing in the early '80s, describes himself as lenient. "I'm not strict, although I also get mad," he admits. "But I don't shout."

His cool working style has earned him the respect and friendship of his colleagues in the business.

For instance, Maricel Soriano, who worked with Chionglo for seven years in "The Maricel Drama Special," and screenwriter Ricky Lee, who collaborated with him on his "Macho Dancers" trilogy," regard the mild-mannered, Ateneo-schooled filmmaker as a close friend.

Friend and classmate

Chionglo started working in films in 1976 when friend and classmate Mike de Leon asked him to be his production designer for his directorial debut, "Itim." Two years later, Lino Brocka tapped him to write a screenplay for Charito Solis and Lolita Rodriguez, who were then co-starring in Nick Joaquin's "Larawan," which was also directed by Brocka. That movie, "Ina, Kapatid, Anak," opened more doors for Chionglo.

It was Regal's Mother Lily Monteverde who gave Chionglo his directorial break—"Playgirl," a domestic drama starring Gina Alajar. The movie wasn't a hit, but the Regal matriarch didn't lose faith in Chionglo. She asked him to meg youth-oriented movies starring her coterie of Regal Babies.

Looking back, Chionglo says he started to mature as a filmmaker in "Lucia," a film produced by the BBC starring Gina Alajar and Lolita Rodriguez. "Among my 40-plus films, that was the least compromised. I'd like to do something like that again. *Yun ang maganda sa trabahong ito, hindi ka tumatanda!*" Excerpts from our interview:

CHIONGLO. One of local cinema's smartest storytellers.

Among your films, which ones were longest and shortest to make?

The longest was "Dyesebel," which took *two years* to make! The shortest was "Twilight Dancers," which was made in 11 days.

Trilogy

What's the story behind the "Macho Dancers" trilogy?

In 1994, we toyed around with the idea of doing something for the film fest circuit. Our contact abroad said Filipino films weren't being shown at international film festivals since Brocka's "Macho Dancer" became a hit in Toronto. So, we thought of doing "Sibak," followed by "Burlesk King" and "Twilight Dancers."

Of the three, "Twilight" got bad reviews. Any reaction?

Ganun talaga. I used to write movie reviews myself, so I know where the critics are coming from. Sometimes, you get good reviews; sometimes, you get bad ones. Doubled-edged *kasi ang mga ganyang pelikula.* It's a guilty pleasure. People want to watch it, but they feel guilty about watching it. But, in terms of DVD sales, *tumatabo ang* "Twilight."

How was "Twilight Dancers" received in Toronto?

You'd be surprised! The reaction was very positive. It was novel to them, although when I asked around, people said they also have films about their own macho dancers.

Revisions

Do you demand constant script revisions?

In my collaborations with Ricky Lee, by the time we get to the first draft, we have already discussed every detail lengthily.

Whom do you admire among the current young filmmakers?

I love the films of Lav Diaz. I like Dante Mendoza, Ato Bautista, and Nes de Guzman. *Marami pa sila.*

Brocka or Bernal?

Both of them were my friends! *Magkaiba sila.* Lino loved rising dramatic action. Bernal was very contemplative. I'd like to have the sensibilities of both, especially the way they translated their politics into film.

Do you have a dream project?

Yes. Ricky Lee has a script that has never been filmed. It's based on Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" and follows the thread of the lovers—Elias and Salome, Maria Clara and Crisostomo Ibarra, and Sisa and her husband. *Ang ganda ng pagkasulat! Bagay sa* young stars *natin.*

Advice

Any advice to new filmmakers?

They should ask themselves: Is this a one-time thing, or is this what I want to do for the rest of my life? Am I doing this for self expression, or do I want to touch a wider audience?

How do you describe your filmmaking style?

A member of my staff described it to me: He said if Lino Brocka liked a rising dramatic action, *ako naman daw,* plateau—*pero pumuputok-putok!* Come to think of it, he's right! (Laughs)

'GRIZZLY MAN'

Herzog's prize-winning documentary has complex protagonist

By Nestor U. Torre

SHOWING ON THE DISCOVERY Channel on June 25 at 9 p.m. is the prize-winning documentary, "Grizzly Man."

Werner Herzog's film is an unusual production because it is mostly made up of footage shot by its central subject, Timothy Treadwell, who spent many years living among the grizzly bears in Kodiak, Alaska, to learn enough about them to become their main advocate throughout the world.

Tragically, however, he and his girlfriend were killed by one of the grizzly bears he had spent so much time trying to understand and protect.

Contradiction

That ironic denouement gives Herzog's documentary a most unusual twist that adds yet another layer of significance or contradiction to its already compelling mix of elements.

We previewed the docu recently and found it a striking viewing experience. The Alaskan vistas filmed by Treadwell are truly stunning, and the wild grizzlies are powerful and amazing to behold.

Even more mesmerizing is Treadwell himself. The wildlife advocate turns out to be a former actor who obviously loved the sound of his voice, because he's forever chattering away in his shots—culled by Herzog from over a hundred hours of footage shot by Treadwell in the 13 summers he spent in the Alaskan wilds.

Passion

However, there's no denying the passion that drove him to give everything up to be at the exclusive environmental service of "his" grizzlies.

TREADWELL. Ironic denouement.

The most stunning sequence in the documentary is a long segment shot by Treadwell of two huge grizzlies fighting almost to the death over bragging and feeding rights to a curve of a river filled with spawning salmon. The brutality of the sequence is particularly shocking because it intimates how Treadwell himself met his end.

On the minus side, the film is overlong and repetitious, and Herzog allows Treadwell too much time to expatiate on sundry self-serving topics.

Indeed, the movie appears to have a number of fake endings, when it seems to have already said and shown enough to convincingly make its point. But, no, it continues past that point to show and say even more, until the viewer is thoroughly sated.

Testament

Seen as a whole, however, "Grizzly Man" is a testament to the power of one man who lives his passion and follows his dream, even if it becomes a nightmare.

Its contradictions also make us redefine the essence and meaning of heroism: Treadwell *is* a hero, but there are some aspects to his persona that are turn-offs.

Despite these contradictions, however, the validity and importance of his cause ring through loud and clear, motivating others to also find their passion and live it with clarity of focus and an abiding faith in its value to others.

Good girls don't always finish last

By Behn Cervantes

IN THE GOOD, OLD DAYS, HOLLYwood films underscored virtues and condemned evil. Lead stars were always virtuous, while their antagonists were evil incarnate, always wore moustaches and often had "dark" eyes—until the likes of Rudolf Valentino and Clark Gable altered that perception.

Evil women were lithe, shapely, and flagrantly wanton—think Theda Bara, Gloria Swanson and Jean Harlow. Blondes like Jeanette MacDonald were just "harmless, pretty ones," until Marilyn Monroe added wicked humor, heart and mystery to the stereotypical image. Her life—onscreen and off—was stranger than fiction. After Monroe, blondes became an exciting, lovable lot.

Sensual blondes

Before Monroe, Lana Turner ("The Postman Always Rings Twice") and other sensual blondes like Carole Lombard, Carole Landis and Veronica Lake were "deadly" predators. Their usual victims were hapless men with innately weak characters. It was the Adam and Eve syndrome at work! Poor John Garfield and Van Heflin didn't stand a chance as soon as Turner set her sights on them!

Sexy stars crossed lines and deftly blended love with need, and lust with human failure. They had such a sexually debilitating effect on men! When they looked like Rita Hayworth, Gene Tierney and Ava Garner, viewers understood why men failed to maintain a gentlemanly attitude!

ALLYSON. Was consistently at the mercy of predatory beauties.

But, good girls don't always finish last. Soon, Tinseltown also created the "goodie gumdrop"-type of leading ladies—pretty girls who represented the girl next door: Mary Pickford, of course, was the quintessential sweet, young thing.

Swooning damsel

Beside Douglas Fairbanks, she was the swooning damsel who had to be rescued by the half-naked, macho leading man. This sexual relationship was strengthened by the image of a bare-chested Tarzan and a leggy Jane hanging precariously from a jungle vine.

One of Hollywood's favorite good girls was June Allyson, who sported sleeved dresses, a pageboy hair-do, and a distinct lisp. When in trouble, that speech trait accentuated her vulnerability. She was fine beside the likes of Van Johnson and James Stewart, but when pitted against Turner in "The Three Musketeers," the poor damsel was doomed—Allyson was consistently at the mercy of predatory beauties!

Lucrative career

Another popular good girl was Ann Blyth. The petite beauty acted well, possessed a classically-trained soprano, and enjoyed a lucrative career in Hollywood, until she decided to marry a wealthy doctor and retire from show biz.

Ironically, Ann didn't start out as a good girl. In fact, she played the spoiled daughter of Joan Crawford in "Mildred Pierce." Crawford won her solitary Oscar statuette for the "maternal" woes she went through with Blyth. So, Ann did something good—even when she was bad!

Ama Quiambao sinks her thespic teeth into 'Bagahe'

By Rito P. Asilo

WE VIVIDLY REMEMBER CHARacter actress Ama Quiambao from the classic Nora Aunor starrer "Himala," Ishmael Bernal's cinematic masterpiece about religious fanaticism and celebrity.

For the past week, during lulls in rehearsals for the Third Virgin Labfest (the upcoming theater festival at the CCP), the soft-spoken actress has been regaling us with a lifetime's worth of fond memories and amusing anecdotes about her experiences as a veteran film and stage actress—from theater legends, Rolando Tinio and Ella Luansing, to movie superstars, Sharon Cuneta and Judy Ann Santos—and as the doting wife of noted classical singer, Gamaliel Viray.

We enjoy trading stories with Ama, who admits to "idolizing" Boots Anson-Roa and the Megastar. You sense sincerity and a hint of concealed sadness in her loving eyes.

We were also struck by the beauty of her humility, calm demeanor—and wisdom. For instance, she shares: "Despite its less than ideal environment, you'll meet the nicest people in show biz, while the craziest ones, you'll meet in theater—because they're more real!

Perfect

"I idolized Boots. I was starstruck when I met her because she was perfection personified. Unlike other actresses, *hindi ko sya ginaya, hinangaan ko lang sya!* Judy Ann likes having theater people around, *wala siyang arte.* She's not high maintenance.

"I met Sharon when I acted in Olivia Lamasan's 'Minsan Minahal Kita.' Sharonian *ako e! (Laughs)* I was sharing a room with Rosemarie Gil and Sharon, so when Rosemarie and I were asked to transfer to a smaller room *dahil may aircon daw dun.* I said, '*Nakakahiya kung kami ang nasa may* aircon, *tapos ang* room *ng star, wala.*' I didn't know that Sharon was there—and she said the arrangement was all right with her. I saw how real she was!

QUIAMBAO (THIRD FROM LEFT, WITH TORRE, DELENA AND MIRASOL). Role of a lifetime.

"I was Tinio's baby. He gave me confidence when I made 'Himala,' my first film. Bernal gave me artistic freedom as an actress. He and his production people provided the right mood and atmosphere, *kaya pagsalang mo,* you immediately feel your character."

Beauty queen

She recalls meeting the late beauty queen and actress, Chat Silayan: "I only met her once, but I liked her very much—I could feel how good a person she was. So, I was sad when I learned that she had already passed away." (Silayan, who was a Miss Universe runner-up in 1980, succumbed to colon cancer last year.)

Ama's film roles aren't always showy, but her body of work is nothing to scoff at—among them Bernal's "Himala," Peque Gallaga's "Virgin Forest," Abbo dela Cruz's "Misteryo sa Tuwa," Dante Mendoza's "Kaleldo," Auraeus Solito's "Tuli," and Olivia Lamasan's "Minsan Minahal Kita." Next month, she will also be seen in Solito's entry to the Third Cinemalaya Film Festival, "Pisay."

For now, though, Ama is on pins and needles as she tackles the role of a lifetime: Starting June 29, the 60-year-old veteran actress will topbill J. Dennis Teodosio's seminal drama, "Bagahe," an entry to the Third Virgin Labfest at the CCP.

Set in an uncaring foreign land in the dead of winter, an aging mother (Quiambao) brings up issues of loyalty, identity and betrayal as she prepares to defy her successful grown son's plan to take her to a nursing home.

Bittersweet memories

Ambition and the scars of a poverty-stricken life slowly tear them apart—and only the bittersweet memories of their distant past keep them together.

Teodosio's one-act play examines the ties that bind a mother and her headstrong son (played by Allan Mirasol) after the death of her husband.

As they uncover old wounds, they also confront the need to define home—and happiness. Completing the cast are Minerva Delena and child actress Mica Torre.

"Bagahe," along with Debbie Tan's "Teroristang Labandera" and Lani Montreal's "Looking for Darna," goes onstage on June 29 at 3 and 8 p.m., July 5 at 3 p.m., and July 8 at 8 p.m. at the CCP's Tanghalang Huseng Batute.

Other productions

Other productions on the festival's first week: On June 28, Narumol Thammapruksa's "He-Me-She-It," Haresh Sharma's "Lizard," and Yoji Sakate's "Three Sisters." On June 30, Auggie Arcenas' "Seance," Allan Lopez's "Kasaysayan," and George Vail Kabristante's "My Padir Is an OCW." On July 1, Argel Tuason's "Kuyom," Arlo de Guzman's "Three Unsent Letters," and Layeta Bucoy's "Ellas Inosentes."

Children's plays, independent productions, public readings, and platform discussions are also in the lineup. And the festival will bring back two of last year's crowd favorites on July 3-4: Job Pagsibigan's "Palanca On My Mind" and Liza Magtoto's "Hubad." (Call 832-3661 or 891-9999.)

Aside from its new section on international plays, the Virgin Labfest—which runs at the CCP from June 28 to July 8—will also experiment with new theatrical styles and trends. So, if you want to bask in the glow and dynamic spirit of Philippine theater, see you at the festival!

Ruminative storytelling, risky themes at Eiga Sai

"KAMIKAZE GIRLS." Insightful and visually delectable.

By Rito P. Asilo

YOUTH-ORIENTED MOVIES (*SEI-shun eiga*) dominate this year's Eiga Sai, the Japanese Contemporary Film Festival ongoing at the Shangri-La Mall.

These films go beyond telling stories about impulsive love and youthful rebellion that characterize many of mainstream Hollywood's tweener flicks.

Japanese filmmakers churn out a surprisingly substantial *oeuvre* fraught with surreal images, eclectic music, and the pervasive theme of generational doom. Take Shunji Iwai's hypnotic "All About Lily Chou Chou," about a girl who leaps to her death after her male classmates force her into prostitution.

Enduring love

Hard to find but otherwise critically acclaimed contemporary Japanese films we purchased in Kuala Lumpur and Singapore reek of melancholia—like Naoto Kumazawa's "Rainbow Song," about the elusive but enduring love between its protagonists, and Isamu Nakae's bittersweet "Sugar and Spice," with its ruminations on first love.

At the Eiga Sai, a number of movies are based on popular *manga* graphic novels, characterized by high style, and adrenaline-fueled energy—like festival opener, "Kamikaze Girls," "Blue," "Hotel Hibiscus," and "Blue Spring." The *manga*, despite being a one-dimentional medium, boasts of the Japanese comic-book novels' broad thematic spectrum .

The current lineup highlights narrative innovation and experimentation, and the movies can stand beside the filmography of Akira Kurosawa and Yasujiro Ozu.

Unlike Shinobu Yaguchi's hilarious and very commercial "Waterboys," which opened Eiga Sai's 2004 edition, this year's characters are not just zany and stubborn, they range from the quirky to the tortured:

"HOTEL HIBISCUS." Intiially slow-moving, but ultimately rewarding.

In "Kamikaze Girls," an eccentric high school girl living in a sleepy prefecture fantasizes about life in 18th century France, and even dresses in rococo fashion—until she forms an unlikely alliance with a tough-talking biker chick. "Hotel Hibiscus" follows the humdrum life of 9-year-old Meiko and her peculiar family during a hot summer in Okinawa.

In "Harmful Insect," seventh grader Sachiko endures relentless gossip and ostracism when her affair with her handsome teacher is revealed. He's forced to quit teaching, while Sachiko's mother attempts suicide.

Competition

"Stars Converge" follows the story of a young Japanese girl, who meets a Korean boy at a high jump competition. They agree to meet again the following year, but the competition is canceled. Twenty-six years later, she's already a PE teacher. She attends the same competition, then she learns that a Korean organized it.

In "No One's Ark," a young man and his girlfriend peddle an awful-tasting health drink to pay off a huge debt; two girls share an unexpected kiss, until one of them finds out that the other is pregnant ("Blue"); eight high school boys play the risky game of school politics in a fatalistic "clapping" game ("Blue Spring").

Thematic parallelisms exist between Hiroshi Ando's gender-bending "Blue" and Korea's "Wishing Stairs" and "Memento Mori." But, while the latter two fascinate with their flashy horror tactics, "Blue's" lead actress elevates the material beyond cheap thrills. (Her performance won for her the best actress plum at the Moscow Film Festival.)

Sexually provocative

Among internationally acclaimed contemporary Japanese auteurs (Takeshi Kitano, Hideo Nakata, Kiyoshi Kurosawa), Takashi Miike, best known for his violent and sexually provocative "Audition" and "Visitor Q," is showcased via "Shangri-La (Japan Goes Bankrupt)," using the backdrop of economic recession and a stock market crash, while a ragtag group of social misfits devises a plan to fight corruption.

Our top picks: "Kamikaze Girls," Tetsuya Nakashima's insightful and visually delectable coming-of-age tale, and Yoji Nakae's initially slow-moving but ultimately rewarding "Hotel Hibiscus."

Many of these contemporary Japanese films allow us a peek into the modern Japanese psyche and provide a rich avenue for social commentary.

Though the long gaps between screenings are a bummer, the Eiga Sai screenings (call 811-6155 to 58) are nevertheless well-organized, and the lineup is a scrumptious cinematic buffet of taut and thoughtful films. Plus, a free seat is always appreciated. The festival runs at the Shang until June 26.

Lack of tension burdens thriller remake

By Noelani Torre

THERE'S SOMETHING INVISIBLE IN "The Invisible," all right, and it's not just the main character. In the movie's trailer, an appropriately creepy old guy says, "You'll never be seen again. They can't touch you. They can't hear you. But, if you can solve the mystery of your own death, then you'll have the chance to live again!"

Watch the movie, however, and the guy is not there at all, and you'll realize some 30 minutes into it that the supernatural mystery that the trailer promised isn't around, either.

This bait and switch wouldn't have been that big a deal if the angsty teen melodrama that the movie actually is had turned out to be halfway decent. Unfortunately—especially for those who have overcome the existential self-absorbance of adolescence—this film can't be taken seriously.

A remake of a critically acclaimed Swedish film ("Den Osynlige"), the movie is helmed by "Batman Begins'" screenwriter, David S. Goyer, who tries to show us that his film is actually a character study, and that it's *really* about the alienation that many teenagers experience—they feel "invisible," hence the dual symbolism in the title. It doesn't quite gel that way, however.

Death wish

Justin Chatwin (Tom Cruise's son in "War of the Worlds") is Nick Powell, a bright, seemingly perfect teenager with a cold, micromanaging mom (Marcia Gay Harden). In the movie's first five minutes, he dreams about killing himself, and he nearly gets his death wish fulfilled when he's beaten up and left for dead in the woods by a group of teenage thugs.

LEVIEVA AND CHATWIN. Their movie is burdened with too many navel-gazing moments that don't contribute to character development.

Trapped in a limbo, he has to get the attention of people (who can neither see nor hear him) so that they can rescue his marginally alive body.

Ironically, the only person who can hear him is Annie (Margarita Levieva), who was the one who tried to kick him to death!

Throughout the movie, you can sense that the people behind it tried to make it something more than your typical B-movie teen fare. The technical aspect is pretty good—the autumnal palette and muted golden undertones are evocative of the fleeting, yet significant childhood years.

The soundtrack—though stuffed with must-listen-to songs from acts like Snow Patrol and Death Cab for Cutie—is actually distracting.

Introspective scenes

Some introspective scenes will hold your attention, but the movie as a whole is burdened with too many navel-gazing moments that don't do much to push the story forward or contribute to character development.

In the end, the slight tension that exists is sustained only by Annie's black wool cap (you wait for the moment when she'll take it off and reveal what you just know will be cascading Disney princess curls)—and the fact that Nick *does* have to get people to rescue him!

Honeymoon is over. . .

From page H1

addresses—where people can express their opinions and show incriminating photos or tapes that chronicle some stars' nefarious activities much more efficiently than even the paparazzi can.

Other factors include the movement for moral resurgence sweeping the States and as the increased profligacy of some stars' excesses, which have become too shocking to be ignored or forgiven.

How will it all end? If even the high-flying Britney Spears can find her career at risk, and Paris Hilton can be forced to stay in a prison facility that's far from being a five-star hotel, it looks like Hollywood stars' profligate, halcyon days are over, and show biz luminaries now have to tread the straight and narrow like other people, if they want to sustain their popularity.

What about our own homegrown stars, who continue to flaunt their scandals and sins of omission and commission in the media? What will it take for them to also realize that stardom isn't a license for them to break laws and behavioral norms, and shock the public with their profligate behavior?

As in the States, the show biz audience and government and law enforcement officers have the answer—and hold the key.

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JEON (LEFT). The Korean actress recently won at Cannes for her performance in "Secret Sunshine."

Hawaii film festival fields deep pool of Asian talents

TOKYO—IN THE FILM WORLD, CHINA is "red hot." Japan is making a comeback, and Thailand has the scariest horror films around. But, South Korea is the biggest draw of all.

Organizers of this year's Hawaii International Film Festival say they have a deep pool of talents for the event, which will showcase more than 150 feature films, documentaries, shorts, and animations from across the Asia-Pacific region. It's expected to draw some 70,000 people.

"The buzz in Cannes was that China was red hot," festival director Chuck Boller said recently. "But, Korean cinema has truly taken off and is fueling Asian cinema throughout the world."

Promoters are hoping to draw tourists to the event, first held in 1981, with promises that it won't be like other festivals—where the closest guests get to the stars is a glimpse of them on the red carpet. "It's Hawaii," Boller replied. "It's more casual, so there's more access."

On a roll

To give it a distinct Asian flavor, organizers are pursuing Korean stars to attend the festival, which runs from Oct. 18 to 28. Asia, without a doubt, is on a roll, film-wise: South Korean actress Jeon Do-Yeon won the best actress award at this year's Cannes Film Festival for her role as a widow struggling to cope with her husband's death in "Secret Sunshine." Her award garnered front-page news coverage and drew congratulations from President Roh Moo-Hyun.

Cannes' Grand Prix, its No. 2 award, went to "Mogari No Mori" (The Mourning Forest) by Naomi Kawase of Japan, about an elderly man at a retirement home and a caretaker, and their attempts to overcome personal losses.

Taiwanese director Ang Lee won the best director Oscar in 2006 for the gay romance, "Brokeback Mountain." Japanese actress Rinko Kikuchi received an Oscar nomination this year for best supporting actress as a deaf teenager in "Babel."

Lack of distribution

Boller said there's much more coming out of Asia and the Pacific than catches the eyes. "Some of the scariest horror films are from Thailand," he explained. "And, because of the lack of distribution, many Chinese films that we screen you wouldn't even see in China—unless you were in Beijing!" *AP*

Oprah brings out the best in people

By Lilia Borlongan-Alvarez

EPISODES OF "OPRAH" (NOW AIRED on the Hallmark channel) continue to inspire viewers around the world with stories of faith and courage:

Patrick Henry Hughes is a paraplegic who was born literally without eyes but with an ear for music. He learned to play the trumpet and piano and became a member of a marching band!

Visual disability

Inspired by Debussy's "Claire de Lune," Patrick says his visual disability doesn't faze him. To him, looks don't matter, because he "sees" what's inside a person's heart. He credits his success to his parents' devotion and tender, loving care.

The show has also featured Schneider Mettelus, an 11-year-old boy who helped his mother give birth to his baby brother by cutting the latter's umbilical cord.

Then, there's the "pay it forward" challenge, Oprah's way of making fans feel good about themselves by giving them $1,000 cash gift—not to spend on themselves, but for needy strangers. Lucky recipients include homeless people living on welfare.

Another episode, called "Mission Beyond the 11th," was about two widows who lost their husbands in the 9/11 attacks. Despite the tragedy, they chose not to be consumed by their misery and instead, focused their attention on helping—and giving hope to—women in Afghanistan.

The widows raised more than $400,000 to assist jobless, poverty-stricken, burqa-clad Afghan women, some of whom were caught on camera begging for food on the streets with their young children in tow.

WINFREY. Her guests trust her with their pain.

Touching stories

The show's touching stories have dealt with breast cancer survivors, among them Elizabeth Edwards, wife of former US vice presidential candidate, John Edwards. The author of the book, "Saving Graces"—about finding solace and strength in friends and strangers—was diagnosed with advanced breast cancer only days before the 2004 elections. In 1996, her son died at age 16.

The gracious lady related her experience matter of factly, and with a smile on her face—how she underwent aggressive chemotherapy and radiation for many months. Oprah then revealed that Edwards had just been declared cancer-free by her doctors, a welcome revelation that the audience greeted with warm applause.

Impeachment

In a special episode, former US President Bill Clinton poured his heart out about how he felt when he was facing impeachment after admitting to acts of "impropriety" with Monica Lewinsky, how his marriage almost fell apart, and how sorry he was for having acted like an idiot. The segment revealed the weaker side of a powerful man—he also makes mistakes, like the rest of us! Clinton's revelations did not make him less of a man.

Oprah, compassionate host that she is, asks questions with respect. Her guests trust her with their pain. She understands and genuinely feels for them. Truly, the seasoned host has brought out the best in people—in the wake of their frailties!

Review premised on a mistake

By Nestor U. Torre

I APOLOGIZE TO MARIA RESSA and ABS-CBN News for my review of Channel 2's morning program, published in the Inquirer last June 20. I mistakenly thought that the three telecasts I viewed were of the channel's new show, "Magandang Umaga, Pilipinas," but they were in fact "a *transition* between the old and the new," as I have subsequently been informed.

Thus, my evaluation has been described as "a review premised on a mistake," and I sincerely apologize for the misperception.

Wrong impression

An apology is in order, because the incorrectly premised review inadvertently preempted the formal launch of the new morning show, "Umagang Kay Ganda," on Monday, June 25, and gave the wrong impression of what the new show would be like. In addition, my observations picked up some of the reasons why the show was being reprogrammed.

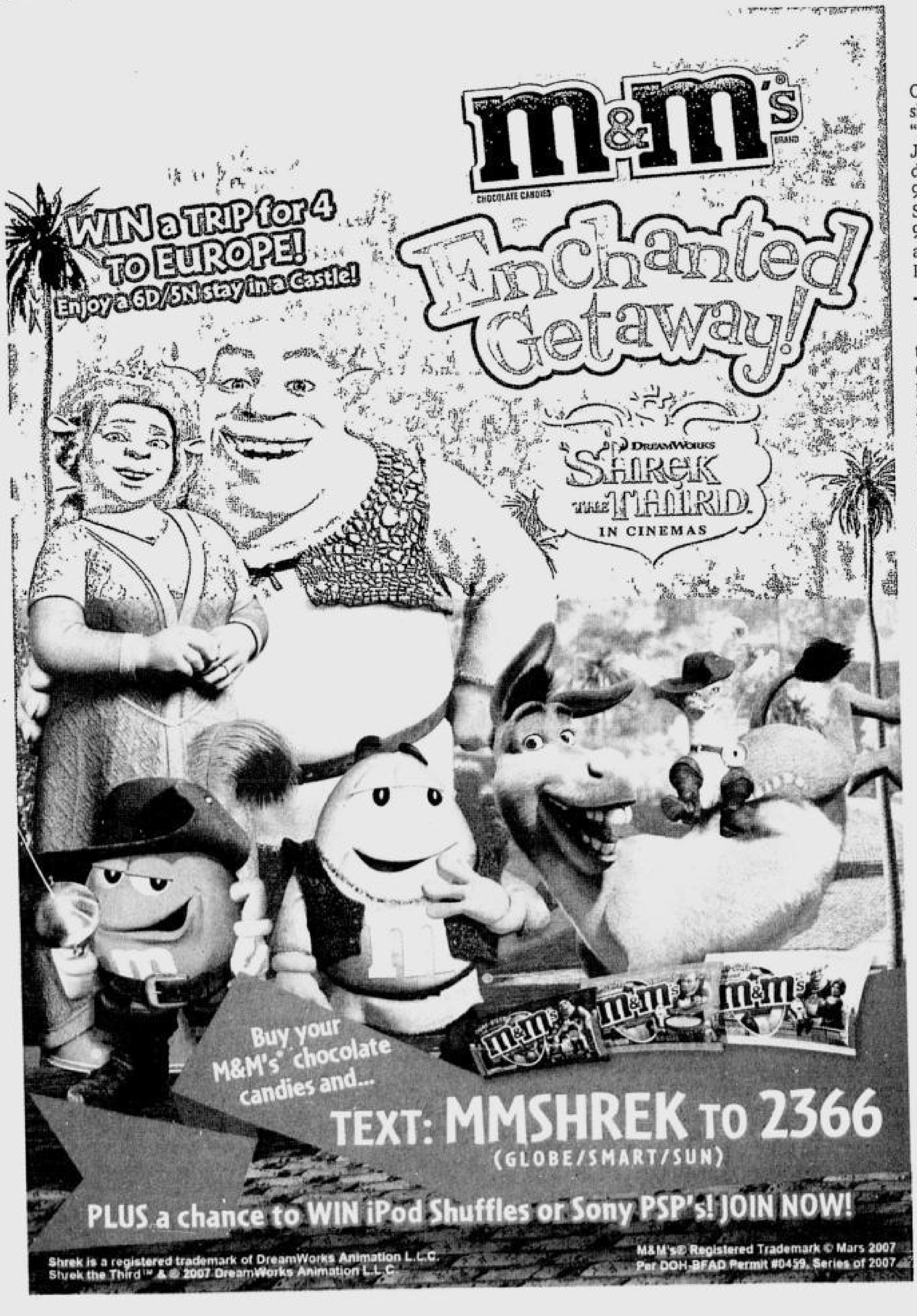
As I have been reminded, the review in effect prejudged, without meaning to, a program that hasn't yet been launched, leaving a potentially negative taste for viewers and advertisers. Some people who read the review may no longer anticipate and watch the show on Monday.

It may also hit the credibility of ABS-CBN News, which is committed to raising the quality of broadcast journalism.

Great launch

In the light of these potential consequences, I reiterate my apology to ABS-CBN News and the people involved in "Magandang Umaga, Pilipinas," and sincerely hope that the new program will have a great launch on Monday.

I'm coming out with this apology before the launch to clear the air, wish the show well, and urge viewers to watch and appreciate it on its own terms, with no reference to my incorrectly premised June 20 review.



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Take five for July

MONTAGE

ON THE MGM CHANNEL, FIVE FILMS TO BE shown next month stand out: July 2 at 9 p.m., "Man on the Moon," with Reese Witherspoon. July 8 at 9 p.m., "The Rose Garden," with Liv Ullman. July 21 at 9 p.m., "The Comfort of Strangers," with Christopher Walken. July 22 at 9 p.m., "The War at Home," with Kathy Bates. and July 23 at 9 p.m., "True Confessions," with Robert DeNiro.

Tanghalang Ateneo

"Isang Bilog ng Caucasus," the Filipino translation of Brecht's "The Caucasian Chalk Circle," leads off the 29th season of Tanghalang Ateneo on July 5. Other season offerings are "Death of Memory" by Glenn Mas in November, and Shakespeare's "Cymbeline" early next year. Call 426-6001 loc. 5036.

Dulaang UP

The 32nd theater season of Dulaang UP opens on July 18 at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater with "Pasyon," based on the Wakefield Cycle of 32 Mystery Plays. Leads include Romnick Sarmenta and Stella Cañete; Tony Mabesa directs.

The Ryan Cayabyab Singers

Ryan Cayabyab, in cooperation with Sony BMG, announces auditions for the country's newest and most exciting ensemble, The Ryan Cayabyab Singers, to be held at 1 p.m. tomorrow, June 24, at The Music School of Ryan Cayabyab, Robinsons Galleria (call 914-5055). Auditionees should be exceptional singers between 18 nd 25 years old. The Ryan Cayabyab Singers will be trained for recording and live performances by Mr. C himself.

CAYABYAB. Will train new talents for recording and live performances.

'Ratatouille'

The new animated feature, "Ratatouille," is about Remy, a rat whose "impossible" dream is to become a gourmet chef. His friend, Linguini, is the lowly garbage boy at a posh restaurant, and they team up out of mutual desperation to make the "impossible"—a scintillating reality! Remy is voice-acted by Patton Oswalt and Linguini is played by Lou Romano. "Ratatouille" is directed by David Devan.

'Vacancy'

Luke Wilson is thrilled to act in his first suspense film, "Vacancy." In the film, he and his wife (played by Kate Beckinsale) spend the night in a seedy motel, only to realize that it is the scene of a series of grisly "thrill" murders—and they could be the next victims"!

Thus, they have to overcome their marital woes and act together to foil their mysterious murderers, before it's too late!

Movies on TV

On HBO, today at 8:15 a.m., "Dangerous Liaisons." Tomorrow at 5 p.m., "Selena." June 26 at 11 p.m., "The Lords of Discipline." June 27 at 6 a.m., "Ordinary People." June 28 at 4:45 p.m., "Jerry Maguire." June 29 at 11 p.m., "Elizabethtown."

On Cinemax today at 5:05 p.m., "Every Which Way But Loose." Tomorrow at 5:05 p.m., "In Good Company." June 25 at 1:55 a.m., "It's a Wonderful Life." June 26 at 7:55 a.m., "Merrill's Marauders." June 27 at 11 p.m., "Simon Sez." June 28 at 9:25 a.m., "Trading Places." June 29 at 6 a.m., "Bonnie and Clyde."

WILSON. Co-stars wih Kate Beckinsale in "Vacancy."

REMY and Linguini are unlikely bosom buddies in "Ratatouille."